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BALLOU'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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THREE FALSE TEETH.

BY JAMES GREENWOOD.

IT IS difficult to conceive a woman more blinded by vanity than when, her age being forty, she marries a man six-and twenty, in full and unquestioning confidence of a blissful voyage on the sea of matrimony until her life's end.

Thus, under the most favorable conditions, when the woman is well favored as regards personal appearance, and admirably preserved for her years, kindly tempered and cheerfully willing to yield to her husband in all things reasonable; and he—well, not ugly, but, to put it mildly, one who would scarcely aspire to take first prize at a manly beauty show, a quiet and amiable creature, eschewing the frivolities of life, and delighting in nothing so much as the comforts of home.

Such a pair may get on tolerably well together. But instead, let the woman be "plain," suspicious, and sourly conscious of her unattractiveness, and the man a handsome, pleasure-seeking, selfish spendthrift, impatient of restraint, and what can result but misery? Especially if she has all the money and he has none. Then it may end in murder, or in something so closely resembling it that twelve British jurymen, after listening to the case with exemplary patience for three days, and laying their wise heads together for as many hours, can arrive at no other conclusion.

Possessed of the comfortable sum of £5000, uncontrolled and her own to do with exactly as she pleased, Miss Jane Costick discovered that money would not secure her a husband. Not an eligible one, that is to say. From the age of twenty upward there were never lacking wooers who were perfectly willing to mate with her for the sake of her money. But it is easy to understand that under such conditions a very plain woman, assuming her to be possessed of common sense, would naturally be more capable of judging between the real love and the sham than one pretty enough to harbor the conceit that she can command the homage of the other sex, and that, however lavishly the same may be bestowed, it is no more than her due.

Miss Costick was hard featured and stern looking. Thin-lipped and wide-mouthed, with a nose of no particular style, but of the composite order, and with light gray eyes deeply set in their orbits. But just as there are women who would marry Lazarus himself if he had picked up crumbs enough, so there are solid business men—and many of them of not the worst sort, either—who, seeking a wife, are willing to waive face and figure for a fair equivalent in shape of a handsome balance at the lady's bankers.

Such were among those that came courting Miss Costick, but she would have none of the professional fortune hunter and the passionate lover—fine dashing fellows both of them, who found themselves mystically attracted toward her by something more subtle and soul-alluring than mere beauty, and they could not possibly continue to exist a week longer unless she consented to be theirs. But they were one and all treated to such a liberal allowance of cold-shoulder that, in a manner of speaking, few of them cared to send up their plate again for another

serving, and the lady remained Miss Costick still until she was aged forty-one next birthday.

It was not until then that she met with Mr. Bernard Bellwood. Bernard was a handsome fellow. Not remarkably stalwart or strikingly intellectual, but with faultless features and fine eyes and wavy brown hair, and such a mustache that female admirers felt convinced they had never set eyes on anything more lovely—until Mr. Bellwood opened his mouth, and displayed his double row of pearly teeth, and then they wavered in their opinion.

Of engaging manners and liveliest temperament, Bernard Bellwood was frankness itself.

"Marry," he would say, when rallied on the subject, "why, so I would. But what business has a poor wretch such as I am with a wife? Wasting my life! Why, of course I am. Why don't some sensible, plain-looking party, with plenty of money, make up to me, and rescue me from perdition? Upon my soul, I am in earnest. I would marry such a woman to-morrow, and make her a good husband."

Whether this avowal came to Miss Costick's knowledge is not known, but as events transpired, it seems not impossible. The two met, and Miss Costick's cautiousness was conquered by the gentleman's candor.

"You see in me, my dear madam, a man utterly without means. Nay, I will not conceal from you that I am most deucedly in debt, and in my present reckless mood there is every prospect of my going from bad to worse. But you may believe me when I say that I am heartily sick and tired of my present way of living, and would willingly alter it. Take me as I am, and I swear by all that I hold sacred that I will earnestly do my best to make you happy."

And the end of it was that, before many weeks had elapsed, she gave him a check for £350 to pay all he owed, and married him.

But however much the reader may hereafter feel disposed to commiserate with Mr. Bellwood on his hard fate, it is undeniable that at this stage of his career he was a rascal double-dyed. He was all the time intimate with an extravagant, profligate woman, and, all other means having failed him, it was solely that he might provide himself with money to continue the disgraceful connection that, under stress of desperation, he proposed marriage to Miss Costick.

It was a brutal and cowardly thing to do, and all the worse because Miss Montmorency knew all about it, and indeed was his adviser, the plan between them being that in as short a time afterward as possible, Bellwood was to secure all the money he could wheedle his wife out of, and with it the iniquitous pair were to make a pleasant voyage to Australia.

But in this they were both disappointed. Mr. Bellwood no doubt surmised from his wife's free-handed generosity in paying his debts, that with a little manœuvering, he should soon succeed in getting the bulk of her fortune into his hands. But Mrs. Bellwood had her own peculiar ideas concerning money matters, and he found that her property was secured to her hard and fast. No husband could have behaved better than he did during the first few months, and she loved him with all her heart, but never in her life had she wasted a single pound, and in making him an allowance of £200 a year as pocket money, she no doubt considered that she was treating him liberally.

He tried coaxing and cajoling, but his wife remained obdurate. Then his gayety forsook him, and he became dejected and reckless, and when, in alarm, she insisted on knowing the reason why, he contritely confessed then that he had concealed the fact that his debts before marriage were not £350, but £1350, and the man to whom the £1000 was owing was threatening him, and would certainly put him in prison unless the amount were paid within a week.

It may have been that there was that in his manner while making the sad revelation that roused her suspicions, for, after all, he was but a shallow-pate, and she a particularly shrewd woman, and she insisted on seeing the inexorable creditor, to be taken to him at once. Had he been prepared beforehand, his course would have been easy enough, but not being clever at sudden expedients, there was nothing for it but for him to be furiously indignant at the insult she offered him in questioning his veracity, and that was their first quarrel.

She accused him of marrying her for the sake only of her money, on which he coolly laughed in her face. "The idea," he said, "of her for a moment pretending that she was not perfectly well aware of that from the first! She had got what she bargained for—a young and handsome husband—and she now refused to pay the price. Who, then,

was mean and mercenary—he or she?" But he was altogether in error if he thought to convince her by such an argument as that. She flatly refused to accede to his request as regarded the thousand pounds, and bluntly told him that she believed the "creditor" to be a purely imaginary person, his design being to delude and cheat her.

Mr. Bellwood left his wife in a rage and went straight to St. John's Wood, and informed his friend, Miss Motmorency, of the failure of his endeavor to "put the screw on," and the row that had taken place. The lady did not hesitate to express her opinion that he had acted very foolishly, and that the best thing he could do was to make it up with the "old woman," and try and obtain what he wanted by wheedling and flattery.

But it was too late for that now. His wife's hard and unforgiving nature could not brook the sneers and taunts he had cast at her, and he might as well about have tried to thaw the north pole. He should have his two hundred a year to waste as he pleased, and no more. Whatever he required for his personal use she would pay for. If he were dissatisfied with those terms, and chose to live apart from her, she would offer no objection.

In the face of such insurmountable obstacles to Mrs. Bellwood's check book, there was nothing for her husband but to try his luck in another direction. His wife had some very beautiful antique jewelry that had been in the family since her great-grandfather's time. It was contained in a case conveniently portable, and it was a mere matter of breaking open a locked drawer in her dressing-room to get at it. And one day, to Mrs. Bellwood's dismay, lo! the treasured jewels were missing!

They were worth several hundred pounds, and after what had occurred she not unnaturally suspected her husband. She said nothing to him, however, but set a watch, and within a week her personal spying was rewarded. Her husband accompanied a lady to the theatre, and occupying a box exactly opposite, Mrs. Bellwood saw that her youthful bosom was adorned with a pearl necklet, with a diamond pendant, part of the precious goods stolen from her drawer.

There could be no doubt as to the identity of the article in question. Mrs. Bellwood's opera glasses were powerful, and she could have counted every pearl—every stone.

Quite quietly, and without any display of temper, at the breakfast table next morning, she informed him of the discovery she had made. She was quite satisfied as to who it was that had robbed her, she told him calmly, but she had no wish that the persons implicated should be publicly exposed. All that she stipulated for was that the jewel case, with its contents intact, should be restored to her within a week. If that were not done, those concerned would have to abide by the consequences.

If there were anything that amazed her guilty husband more than her unimpassioned way of making this announcement, it was that she made it in the presence of the servant. Mary, who had come in to remove the breakfast things, stood by the table with her mouth ajar and her eyes wide open in wonderment, and heard every word.

"Good heavens, madam!" he cried, before this amazed witness, "have you lost your senses? How dare you? Leave the room, Mary!"

But Mary, being hindered with the breakfast tray, could not very quickly obey her master's command, and before she had closed the door, distinctly heard him say to his wife in an undertone and with an oath, "There shall be an end to this one way or another. There shall, by God!"

Mary Jones stated at the trial that those were the words she heard, and no amount of cross-examination could shake her testimony.

"And how long afterward did you remain in the house?" was asked her.

"Only until next day. Master discharged me in the presence of mistress. He paid me my wages due and a month over, and told me to pack my boxes and leave the house immediately. I did not ask for a reason why; I did not think it was my place to do so. But I set it down in my mind that it was on account of what I had overheard the day before."

It was not a large house, that in which the Bellwoods resided—a detached villa—somewhat solitarily situated on the way to Beckenham from Norwood. Mary Jones left on Tuesday afternoon, and after that Mrs. Bellwood was not seen alive.

It was not until she had been missing three days that her husband caused any inquiries to be made for her. He himself had not been home during that time. His explanation of this was that his wife and he had not been on very good terms of late, and he thought she had left him in a fit of

temper and would presently come back again; meanwhile he had been staying with a friend, a solicitor's clerk, at St. John's Wood. He had no idea where his wife had gone, or how she was dressed when she left home.

To publish an advertisement accurately descriptive of her appearance it was necessary to ascertain this last, and Mary Jones was called in to ascertain what garments were missing. There were none missing. The absent woman was possessed of no other outer garments but those remaining on the premises—no other hat, or bonnet, no other walking-shoes. It was winter time, but she had gone without muff or cape; she had not taken an umbrella even.

It was scarcely surprising that suspicion began to be excited. The police were communicated with, the house searched, and a very short time after the investigation began Mr. Bellwood was in custody.

The gravest evidences were brought to light indicating that the missing woman had been foully dealt with. In the back garden and closely adjoining the house, there was a shed or outhouse, and the previous tenant had kept a large stock of poultry, and had a fireplace and boiler there to cook food for them. Blood spots were found on the shed floor, and several splashes of the same on the wall near the door. Nothing was discovered in the fireplace, but there were unmistakable signs of there having been a fire quite recently, and on search being made in the dust bin the result was an important "find." It showed beyond a doubt that, for some purpose at present enshrouded in mystery, some of the absent woman's clothes had been destroyed by burning.

Great pains had been taken with a view to reduce everything to ashes, but the endeavor had not been completely successful. Some small scraps of dark blue merino were produced and identified by Mary Jones as being the color and material of a dress her mistress wore commonly in the house—a dark blue dress, with a row of embossed blue glass buttons down the front, and two such buttons were sifted out of the ashes. More evidence still was brought to light in the dust bin. The charred remains of a lady's corset—merely the metal eyelet holes and the steel "busk"—and two blackened silver clasps that once were attached to a pair of elastic garters—to Mrs. Bellwood's garters, as testified by Mary Jones. Incarcerated morsels of flannel, of calico, of silk, were yielded by the inexorable sifting, showing that probably an entire suit of a female's wearing apparel had been burnt. But maybe not in the fire-grate in the shed! This doubt, however, was soon set at rest. Close examination discovered, clinging to one of the bars, a tiny lump of melted glass, and sunk in it a metal shank. It was the remains of one of the blue glass dress buttons from the dress front.

Bellwood appeared horror-stricken and astounded, as one after another these tell-tales were brought to light, and his anguish of mind, that he should be suspected of a crime so terrible, had, it was said, completely prostrated him. His friends ridiculed the idea of his being guilty. What could be more preposterous, they asked, than that he should contemplate such a dreadful deed? He had nothing to gain by his wife's death, and everything to lose. Beside, the evidence that a murder had been committed was at present anything but conclusive.

But, even those who are most convinced of Bellwood's innocence were dismayed when they read in the newspapers an account of the preliminary examination before the magistrate. The evidence known to be in the hands of the police was insignificant, compared with what they were then prepared to produce.

There had been further sifting, and three teeth had turned up!

Not natural teeth, but artificial ones. They were set in gold, and a dentist was in attendance who identified them, and stated that two years previously he had supplied these identical teeth to Miss Costick.

But the crowning proof, not only that Mrs. Bellwood had been murdered, but also that her husband had killed her, was the production of a slipper, one of a pair commonly worn by him. There was a blood patch on the sole of it, and adhering several human hairs—long hairs from a woman's head. Other hairs from a brush on Mrs. Bellwood's dressing table were compared with them, and they were found to be precisely similar!

Bellwood was committed to take his trial for willful murder.

That the suspected man was guilty was the universal opinion, and the puzzle was—what had he done with the body? It was not like that of a child that might be easily disposed of. Mrs. Bellwood was a woman whose stature was above the ordinary. Her

height was five feet seven, and her weight probably between eleven and twelve stone. It seemed impossible that a slightly built man such as Bellwood was could convey such a bulk any distance without dismembering it, and, excepting three false teeth, there was absolutely nothing to indicate that the body had been made away with by the same means that had destroyed the clothes.

The garden was dug from end to end, the cellars explored, the nearest canal dragged, but no vestige of Mrs. Bellwood's human remains could be discovered. One important fact transpired. A fortnight previous to her disappearance, she had drawn out of the bank all her money, consisting of £3000, and a singular circumstance in connection with that transaction was that she had taken the money all in gold. She had brought with her to the bank a black leather bag, and a bank porter had placed it in a cab at the door.

What had become of all this money? Presuming that Bellwood had induced her to give it to him, how had he disposed of it in so short a time?

There was one way of accounting for it. It was shown that he was addicted to gambling—to playing cards, to visiting race meetings. He had been seen at two October meetings at Newmarket two days in succession.

Then, as regards his assertion that as soon as he found his wife had left home he had made his temporary abode at the house of a friend who lived at St. John's Wood, and who was a solicitor's clerk. It turned out to be quite true, that he had been staying at the house in question, but the "solicitor's clerk" was the landlord merely, and in the witness box he gave evidence that he had no acquaintance with Mr. Bellwood, but knew him by sight from his having been a constant visitor during the past two years to a young lady —a Miss Montmorency—to whom he let furnished apartments.

Then came the testimony of Mary Jones. She spoke as to the frequent quarrels between husband and wife, and which seemed to be "all about money." To an attentive court, Mary detailed the extraordinary breakfast table scene, at which she was present. Without absolutely accusing him of stealing it, Mrs. Bellwood had informed her husband that a drawer in her dressing-room had been broken open and her jewel case abstracted. She had no desire, her mistress had said, to make a public exposure of the affair, but unless the jewel case with its contents complete was restored to her within a stated time, she should take proceedings for its recovery, and the persons concerned must put up with the consequences. Her master hearing this, did not appear astonished, only furious. He bade her—Mary—leave the room, and as she was doing so she heard her master say to her mistress, "—— you! There shall be an end to this, one way or another. There shall, by god!"

Next to be sworn was Caroline Jenkins, alias Maud Montmorency—Caroline in a fright, and evidently terribly afraid that the stain of the prisoner's guilt might be made to extend to her. She had known him a long time, more than two years, was very intimate with him, indeed. He had made her presents, as had other gentlemen whom she knew. She had no idea that he was married. The last presents he had made her were the pearl necklace and diamond pendant produced (and identified by the wife's cousin), and an emerald ring. He told her that his mother was dead, and had bequeathed him a lot of old-fashioned jewelry. She had pawned a pair of diamond earrings and a pair of bracelets at his request and handed him the money. She would swear that she was unaware that he was married, and always understood from him that he was living in bachelor lodgings.

Other evidence of an incriminatory character followed, and, after a trial that lasted through three days, Bernard Bellwood was found guilty of "willful murder" and condemned to death.

And no doubt the sentence would have been carried out, but for one circumstance. A week after the conviction a man came forward, voluntarily, and made a sworn statement. He was a working dentist, and kept a small shop in a street in Soho, and one evening, about a fortnight before the murder, a poor-looking woman brought him a job. It was to mate and set in gold three false teeth, precisely to a pattern she left with him for the purpose. It was night-time when she gave the order, and night-time when she called for the teeth, and as the gas-light in his shop was not good, he would not undertake to swear to the woman. But, partly burnt as they were, he was quite prepared to take oath that the three teeth discovered in the dust bin were his handiwork. He would have tendered his evi-

dence before, but had been ill in bed and knew nothing of the murder or the trial until it was all over. Further inquiry being made, the first dentist was in a position to prove that he never used gold for his work of a poorer sort than eighteen carat. The second dentist declared that he had used twelve carat gold for the job in question; and assays showed that the burnt teeth were set in metal of exactly that quality.

On this ground a respite was granted, fortunately, indeed, for Bellwood, otherwise he would have been hanged and buried within the jail precincts just ten days before a letter was received by the police authorities.

It came from New York, and from the supposed murdered woman.

It appeared that she had remained concealed in London up to the day when her husband was sentenced to death, and, making no doubt that he would suffer the extreme penalty of the law, she started for America next morning. Arrived there, she heard nothing of the respite, and her grim determination to insist on the full measure of vengeance she had planned against the man who had treated her so badly sustained her for a time, but seemingly failed her as the day of execution drew nigh. Even then, however, she would not save his life. With her mind unhinged, probably, by her terrible crime, on the very day that Bellwood was to have been hanged she committed suicide by poisoning, first writing the letter justifying the act and detailing the process by which she made him appear guilty of her murder. She had purposely arranged that the servant should be present when she accused him of stealing her jewelry. Taking advantage of being alone in the house, and his absence from home, she had burned her clothes and placed in the fire the false teeth she had procured for the purpose of a dentist in Soho. She had cut herself in the arm, and with the blood manufactured the sanguinary evidences discovered in the shed and on one of her husband's slippers. She had pulled the hairs from her head to perfect this last item of ghastly testimony. And then in clothes privately purchased, and with her £3000 of ready money, she vanished from the scene and took an obscure lodging to await results.

This, without one word expressive of remorse or penitence, was Mrs. Bellwood's confession. The result, of course, was Bellwood's immediate release, and, in a very short time, conclusive evidence of his wife's suicide was received from New York. What became of the money she took away with her was never known. Or what became of Bellwood, for that matter, since he shortly afterward disappeared. One thing at least is certain—"Miss Maude Montmorency" knew no more of him.

A BUCKBOARD IDYL.

BY LOUISE DUPRE.

THEY set out on a buckboard—Mrs. Alexander Sedley, of Baltimore, with her daughter, Miss Beatrice Sedley, and her niece, Miss Nina Claxton; Miss Bonowscale and her brother, of Philadelphia; Miss Mary Alger, of Boston; Mr. Parker Jessop and his sister, of Indianapolis.

I have set them down in the order of distinction which they enjoyed in Bar Harbor society. Social distinctions are somewhat arbitrary there, as they often are at watering-places. The Sedleys, apparently, owed their supremacy to the appearance of Mrs. Sedley, who was thought to have "the air of a duchess," and to hints which had been dropped by some of their Baltimore acquaintances, sojourning at another hotel, concerning their long pedigree. Miss Alger from Boston said they owed it to the fact that Mrs. Sedley held everybody "in the grasp of magnetism."

Miss Bonowscale's elevated position was the effect of more tangible causes. She had Worth dresses and diamonds in abundance, and a grown-up brother. The latter possession is almost equal to a patent of nobility in causing one to be sought after at Bar Harbor. There is such a discouraging number of beardless students. Such a dreadful dearth of eligible beaux. Mr. Penn Bonowscale had a Grecian profile, and his waltzing was, as Miss Beatrice Sedley remarked, "like a

dream." Miss Alger was extremely scientific and extremely stylish. If she had been the first only she would have been voted "horridly strong-minded," and relegated to the society of the few choice but beauless spirits who dissected crabs and sea-cucumbers on the hotel piazza; if she had been the latter only, it might have been her sad lot to be counted among the numerous nobodies, for even nobodies sometimes assume style; the unusual combination made her a social success.

Mr. Parker Jessop and his sister were not considered altogether worthy of the elevated society in which they found themselves on the buckboard. Boston and Baltimore and Philadelphia regarded Indianapolis as doubtful, at the best; and Miss Jessop was somewhat addicted to the use of slang, and dressed in an extremely dashing and bizarre style, even for Mt. Desert. Mrs. Sedley spoke of her as "the untutored savage," and people who were rather more tolerant called her "that little Hoosier." Mr. Parker Jessop, senior, had accompanied his son and daughter to Bar Harbor, but he hovered considerately in the back-ground, his sole *raison d' etre*, apparently, being to pay the bills. He was suspected of having been in Congress, and his pecuniary basis was reported to be as secure as his grammar was awful. Mr. Parker Jessop, junior, was not altogether "grown up"; that is, his mustache was still in incipient stages, and he still honored Harvard College by his presence; but he was the servant of the ladies, as he himself said, and, like his sister, was "in for anything." And the brother and sister had become very popular, even with the cream of East Point Hotel society—people who wouldn't care to know them at home, you know.

As I said before, they set out on a buckboard; but when people set out on a buckboard it may or it may not be written in the Book of Fate that they shall return on one.

The first interference with the original arrangements occurred before they had driven out of the yard, when Mrs. Sedley suddenly remembered that she had made an engagement to call, with a friend, on an acquaintance at the Rodich House, who was to leave the next morning on the early boat. Mrs. Sedley had a pleasant little way of making several engagements for the same time, and fulfilling the one which struck her as most pleasing when the time came. Now she thought the sun was hot, and the buckboard bounced in a way which she did not like, consequently she was reminded of another engagement.

"I'll ask White to take her place," said Mr. Jessop.

The young ladies all expressed approbation of this plan. Mrs. Sedley turned, as she was sailing majestically up to the hotel, to say:—

"Remember we don't know, in the least, who Mr. White is."

Four young ladies resolutely closed their ears to that warning voice, and enthusiastically demanded that the unknown Mr. White be invited without delay.

"He has the brow of a god," said Miss Beatrice Sedley.

"I am quite sure, from his manner, that he has had the advantage of Philadelphia society," said Miss Bonowscale.

"He is not merely a giddy trifler. He understands the hermit crab," said Miss Alger.

"He's a man, anyhow. Wonder if he's got any 'go' to him," said Miss Jessop.

Only Miss Nina Claxton said nothing, although she had had more opportunity to form an opinion of the young man than any of the others, as she had been seen *tete a tete* with him on the piazza several times. On the piazza was where he was usually to be found. He was very seldom seen in the parlors, and he did not seem to form acquaintances readily. Parker Jessop's Western sociability had apparently been successful in overcoming his reserve, and he had gratefully accepted that young man's offer to "introduce him to some of the girls"; but he did not respond freely to anybody's efforts to draw him out. Parker Jessop had discovered that he was a "good fellow," and was indifferent as to his antecedents. The young ladies were disposed to take him on trust, in view of the fact that he was much more than ordinarily good-looking and agreeable. The matrons were admiring but wary.

He had a *distingue* air; he might be a lord traveling incognito; but then he might be a book agent, or anything that was dreadful. One did meet such "truly dreadful" people in hotels!

Mr. White, all unconscious of the doubts concerning him which were harrowing Mrs. Sedley's mind, accepted the invitation, feeling deeply thankful for the goods the gods had provided, as he took the vacant seat beside Miss Nina Claxton.

"Well, Nina can take care of herself. She isn't susceptible," soliloquized Mrs. Sedley, as she surveyed the party from the doorway. "If he is an adventurer he'll never have the spending of Nina's money. I only hope she'll keep him tied to her; the flavor of mystery about him would be just the thing to make Beatrice fall in love with him."

And the worthy matron uttered the deep and heartfelt sigh of a worldly mamma with a sentimental daughter.

Riding on a buckboard is highly conducive to sociability. The ice of reserve and prejudice and indifference seems to be jolted off, and the milk of human kindness flows freely.

The elegant Mr. Bonowscale made himself agreeable to the little Hoosier, holding her red parasol cozily over both their heads, and looking unutterable things under the shelter of it. This was a bitter drop in the cup of Miss Alger, who herself admired Mr. Bonowscale, but what would you have? All cannot be bliss, even on a buckboard, and one's happiness is another's pain, even at Mt. Desert. Moreover, Miss Alger's pang was not without its amelioration. Mr. Bonowscale had manifested an appalling ignorance and indifference in the matter of shell heaps and Indian mounds; it would be difficult for her to lower herself to his level. Should science be eclipsed by a Grecian profile? That little Hoosier was welcome to him; and yet Miss Alger sighed.

Mr. Parker Jessop was devoting himself to Miss Beatrice Sedley, with great empressment, and that young lady was heard to express an enthusiastic desire to behold the "boundless prairies of the West." Certainly he was not Miss Sedley's ideal cavalier, but she was blessed with a vividness of imagination which would have enabled her to transform a much more prosaic young man than he into a hero of romance; and she was, moreover, not without a grain of that practical wisdom expressed in the French proverb,— "*quand on n'a pas ce qu'on aime ce xu'on a;*" a kind of wisdom which is especially necessary at watering-places, where "*ce xu'on aime*" is so often attending to "horrid business," or off yachting, or camping out, with a party of congenial, masculine spirits, and "*be qu'on a*," though he is usually, alas! "nothing but a student," can, at least, dance, and row, and hold one's parasol over one's head, and so do something toward keeping up one's interest in living.

Miss Claxton and Mr. White seemed to have very little to say. She sat, resting her cheek upon her hand, and looking as serene and pensive as if she were upon a bed of roses, instead of a bouncing buckboard; and she turned her head away from Mr. White, in order, apparently, to survey the landscape, so that gentleman was forced to content himself with a view of her back hair, and the brown braids, somewhat roughened by the wind, had a bronze color in the sunlight, that made them worth looking at, or, at all events, so Mr. White seemed to think.

The day was perfect, as Mt. Desert days usually are, except when the fog swoops down, and wraps up all the beauty and brightness in its damp, gray blanket, as if it had a malicious pleasure in defrauding people's eyes of their due. The sun's rays were only just warm enough, the air was like wine, and the sky was a soft, blue tint, which looked as if it were spread solely that people might make merry under it. The horses went—not quite like the wind, but as if they had eaten more oats than usually fall to the lot of Mt. Desert horses. The motion of the buckboard was delightful, there was just enough "bounce" to be exhilarating; altogether several of the party felt as if they were *en route* for Paradise, but not in the least hurry to get there.

But manifold are the chances and changes of this mortal life, and the chances and changes of a buckboard are more.

Even Hosy, the driver, who prided himself of being an accomplished Jehu, acknowledged that a buckboard was "an ugly critter to turn.

"The buckboards was apt to be too wide, or else the streets was too narrer," he further explained. Which of these causes resulted in the downfall of this particular buckboard, was a point never clearly settled in Hosy's mind.

The day was so beautiful that they decided to go to Beach Hill, a good ten miles from the East Point Hotel. It was the custom to leave the conveyance at the top of the summit of a cliff which overhangs a beautiful lake. But the sun was setting as they drove up the hill, and it was decided that it was too late to climb the cliff. Accordingly Hosy was instructed to turn around. That young man's belief in his own skill as a charioteer, forbade him from going on until he reached a more convenient place to turn the "ugly critter," as a less confident person

might have done; but, to Hosy's great surprise, his skill proved unable to force two bodies to occupy the same space at the same time. There was a lively contest for the possession of space between the posterior arrangements of the buckboard, a very zigzag rail fence, and a young and lusty beech-tree, in which the buckboard went to the wall,—figuratively as well as literally. It collapsed almost as irremediably as the one-horse shay; one wheel was broken into pieces, and another broken off, a spring gave way, and one shaft was broken. The occupants, unceremoniously spilled out, thanked their stars, first of all, that buckboards are built near the ground.

Miss Sedley clung tearfully to Mr. Jessop, and addressed him as "my deliverer," as he picked her up, and deposited her on the topmost rail of the fence, with apparently a desire to get her as far as possible out of the way of any further antics which the buckboard might be disposed to perform.

Miss Alger seated herself calmly on a green knoll, and discoursed of that day, in the near future, when triumphant Science should construct a buckboard which could not come apart.

Mr. Bonowscale said emphatically that anywhere in Pennsylvania such an accident would be impossible. Miss Bonowscale hoped it would not get into the Philadelphia papers, and alarm their friends, especially on account of the ill effect which would be thereby produced on the future prosperity of Mt. Desert as a summer resort.

Miss Jessop pronounced it "a lark."

Miss Claxton laughed, as she smoothed her ruffled plumage, at the thought of her aunt's dismay at the shocking unconventionality of the situation. Mr. White—the Mr. White whom they "didn't know in the least"—had put his arm around her, and lifted her out of the ditch into which she was thrown, and was now, with looks of deepest solicitude, asking permission to wipe the blood from a tiny scratch upon her chin. Broken bones would have seemed of small moment to Mrs. Sedley, compared with such unconventional proceedings as these.

Mr. White was at length enabled to turn his attention from the scratch to the practical questions of the hour, and demanded of Hosy how they were to get home?

The whole weight of that young man's intellect was bent upon that problem, which, as I said before, he never succeeded in solving,—whether the buckboard was too wide or the road too narrow; but he aroused himself, took off his hat, and scratched his own head, and said, as if a new idea had struck him:—

"That's a fact! How be we a goin' to git home?"

By severe manipulation of his head, he seemed to succeed, at length, in bringing a bright idea to the surface. Absalom Kittredge, at Somesville, was the possessor of "a mounting wagon."

It was unanimously voted that Absalom Kittredge's "mounting wagon" should appear with the least possible delay.

Somesville was three miles away, and a considerable amount of time necessarily elapsed before Hosy returned with the wagon, but most of the party seemed to accept the situation with philosophical resignation,—notably Miss Claxton and Mr. White, who discovered some wild roses of remarkably brilliant color at a distance, and strolled off to gather them.

Though Hosy returned in apparent triumph with Absalom Kittredge's mountain wagon, he explained that the question of how they were to get home was not quite settled yet; for Absalom Kittredge had let his wagon on the condition that his two nieces, who were to serve as waiters at one of the hotels, should be conveyed to Bar Harbor in it.

"Sarah 'n' Seliny kin set on the front seat long side o' me," said Hosy, "and there's the other two seats that 'll hold six. You kin fix it amongst yourselves, but, as fur as I see, there's agoin' to be two on you left out in the cold."

Whereupon Mr. White threw himself into the breach with the greatest alacrity.

He had a friend who was sojourning at a boarding-house in Somesville, and who had his own horse and buggy with him. Mr. White was sure he could obtain this conveyance; would Miss Claxton allow him the great pleasure and privilege of driving her in it?

A delightful vision of her aunt's discomfiture arose before Miss Claxton's eyes. There was nothing in life that she more thoroughly enjoyed than shocking Aunt Laura. Besides, it would, unquestionably, be much pleasanter to go with Mr. White than to be crowded in the "mounting wagon;" and, moreover, it seemed to her that it would be rather foolish to decline, since it was an easy way of settling the difficulty.

Accordingly they all drove to Somesville in the mountain wagon, and there Miss Claxton and Mr. White gave up their seats to "Sarah and Seliny."

Miss Claxton stood on the plank sidewalk in front of the little hotel, and saw the party drive gayly off in the mountain wagon, without feeling a pang of envy. On the contrary, she had a feeling of elation for which she did not feel altogether prepared to account. She was a practical young woman, with a habit of accounting to herself for her sensations. She seized them in the cold grip of common sense, and dissected them mercilessly; but she skirmished around this one with a vague hesitancy.

She strolled along the shady, tranquil main street of the little village, while Mr. White went in search of his friend. It seemed to her that he was gone a long time. She sat down beside a little brook, that came twinkling along in picturesque fashion, over stones and under shady trees, flecked with dancing sunset lights and shadows. From her seat she could see the road, without being seen. Presently she saw her cavalier coming, looking somewhat anxious and dejected. She called to him, and he crossed the brook to her side. His friend had driven to Green Mountain, and was not expected to return until the next day! Of course he ought to have thought of such a contingency, but he had not. By a singular fatality every team in the village was either absent, engaged, or out of order. He had at last succeeded in hiring a dilapidated buckboard, which was undergoing repairs in the blacksmith's shop, but which was pronounced safe and sound enough for a journey to Bar Harbor, and an ancient horse, who had gone far toward accomplishing Sydney Smith's desire of "taking off his flesh and sitting in his bones." Even this equipage would not be ready for an hour.

"Another buckboard! I'm afraid it's unlucky," exclaimed Miss Claxton.

"I consider the other buckboard a very lucky one," remarked Mr. White, with an accent of reproach.

Whereupon the sunset's hue was suddenly reflected in Miss Claxton's face, to her infinite disgust.. It was unendurable that she, ordinarily so stately, self-possessed, and indifferent, should blush like a school-girl, at a meaningless little compliment paid her, by a man whom a week before she had never seen. Mr. White proposed that they should go to the hotel and get supper, but Miss Claxton did not want any supper. She informed him with great dignity—superinduced by the blushing—that he was perfectly at liberty to go and get his supper, if he wished to. But, apparently, he did not wish to. He wandered off, following the brook through a marshy meadow, to a pond, and returning with a graceful little bouquet, composed of a half-opened water-lily, a spray of velvety cardinal flower, and orealis, and some drooping tendrils of the cranberry-vine, laden with crimson berries, the whole tastefully arranged in one of the dainty vases of the pitcher-plant.

Miss Claxton forgot her vexation in delight and admiration when he presented it to her. She vaguely remembered that no costly exotics, presented by the most devoted admirer, had ever caused her such a thrill of pleasure.

The sunset faded into twilight. Their talk gradually died out, as they sat, side by side, until at length the chattering, gurgling brook, and wide-awake robin, on a branch over their heads, had things all their own way.

But it was very pleasant. When the dilapidated buckboard and the ancient steed came clattèring down the street, Miss Claxton felt they had come, on the whole, quite soon enough.

The buckboard boasted but one seat, the other two which it originally possessed being in the blacksmith's shop with broken springs, consequently Mr. White would be obliged to drive, and send the equipage back to its owner next day; but the absence of a driver did not seem to be an overwhelming grief to either of the travelers.

After they had set out the owner of the buckboard called out to inquire whether Mr. White knew the road to Bar Harbor. Mr. White replied, with easy confidence, that he did. Miss Claxton laughed merrily, and remarked that as there was but one road he must have feared that they would think their equipage adapted to a short cut over the mountains!

But before they had gone a great many miles they came, to the great astonishment of both, to a point where two roads diverged.

"Strange that I did not remember this! I wonder which one we are to take," exclaimed Mr. White, in great vexation, especially great because he had been hovering on the very verge of sentimental utterances,

which he could not but hope, from the lady's manner, would be favorably received. He felt that this necessary return to the practical affairs of life was extremely awkward. Miss Claxton was greatly relieved—and a little disappointed.

A great deal of sentiment had been poured into her ears, and it had always struck her as arrant nonsense, and she had laughed it to scorn. It frightened her to feel that this was a new, and altogether different thing; that it filled her, not with scorn, but with a trembling joy. So it was a relief to be brought down from the heights of sentiment to the level of a practical dilemma.

After some time spent in deliberation they came to the conclusion that the right-hand road was the one which would take them to their destination.

But Mr. White found that the spell was broken. He could not bring the conversation back to the right pitch, sentimentally speaking. Miss Claxton had become animated, and merry, as he had never seen her, and she would not leave a pause for him to fill.

Suddenly they discovered that they were approaching the sea; they caught a glimpse of the shimmer of moonlight on the water, and a lighthouse, here and there, twinkled at them with friendly eyes.

"We are going to Southeast Harbor! We are on the Shore Road!" exclaimed Miss Claxton. "How stupid of me not to remember this road! It goes to Bar Harbor, but it is twice as long as the other road. We sha'n't get home before midnight!"

Mr. White stopped at a house, and inquired whether it would be shorter to retrace their way to the other road, or to go on.

An old man, in a somewhat advanced stage of preparation for bed, illuminated the darkness with a flaring kerosene lamp, and replied that they "could take ery one they wanted to." And he rendered further inquiries impossible by withdrawing himself from the scene, and slamming the door. At the next house, about a mile further on, they elicited the information that it was "consid'able of a piece either way," and their informants "calkilated that 't was about six o' one and half a dozen o' the tother;" and were then disposed to devote themselves to inquiries on their account. As time pressed, the travelers were forced to leave them in a state of painful doubt as to where they lived "when they were to home," how long they "calkilated to stop," how much they paid for their board, and whether they "expected" that the proprietor of the East Point Hotel wanted to buy any chickens.

Since all roads seemed to lead, eventually, to Bar Harbor, they concluded to follow the one which they were on.

On one side of the road lay the sea, with the moonbeams making a golden track across it, on the other side rose the mountains, grand and solemn in their purple shadows. Under the influences of such a scene is it to be wondered at that Mr. White waxed sentimental again, and unrepelled? and the course of true love might have run so tamely smooth that this tale would not have been worth telling, if, just in the nick of time, the ancient beast, whose bones almost rattled as he walked, but who had an eccentric habit of running like a colt, up the long, steep hills, had not suddenly dropped on his knees, in a devotional attitude, at the foot of a hill, as if praying for strength to make the ascent in his customary energetic manner.

Once more was sentiment put to rout. Mr. White succeeded, after prolonged exertions, in inducing the horse to stand upon his feet, but he discovered that one of his shoes was hanging by one nail, and would neither come off nor stay on; and the only way in which he could be persuaded to move on was in an astonishing sort of three-legged jig, which threatened to shake the buckboard and its occupants to pieces.

Mr. White stopped at the first house they came to, and tried to get assistance in fastening the shoe on. The old woman who came to the door informed them that her son had been a blacksmith, but had abandoned that pursuit for a more congenial one of "lobsterin'." She thought he would still be "handier than common folks about a critter's huffs."

She invited Miss Claxton into the house while Mr. White assisted at the repairing of the horse's shoe, and she plied her with questions, which the young lady, being absorbed in her own musings, scarcely heard and answered at random, until a question concerning her companion aroused her.

"Your husband, I expect. No? Brother then? or beau, mebbe?"

Miss Claxton replied in the negative, with great hauteur, utterly lost upon her interlocutor.

"Mebbe you wouldn't have no objections, to tellin' his name, for there's something dredful familiar to me about his looks; seems as ef I could almost place him."

"His name is White."

"Dear me, suz! It's Howard White over to the East Point Hotel, ain't it?"

Miss Claxton bowed assent.

"I heard that he'd been a clerkin' it over there for a considerable spell; and you must be the gal he jilted Eldory Jordan for, ain't you? Eldory took her bed, and they said 'twas a broken heart, but it turned out to be the measles. Well, he is slicked up, and no mistake! I shouldn't 'a' knowed him; and my husband's cousin used to live right long side his folks, over to Cranberry Island, and when he was a little fellow he used to go mackerelin' long of 'Siah. They sent him over to Castine to school, and he's got a beautiful education, and that and store clothes will alter a man so that he don't seem no more like himself than the Old Harry does like a minister. They say he's a studyin' doctorin', and looks down on common folks, and sticks round the boarders over to the East Point. I'm sure I hope he'll turn out a good provider, and that there won't be no jedgement on you on account of Eldory, but"——

To Miss Claxton's inexpressible relief Mr. White appeared at that moment, and announced that the horse's shoe was fastened.

The journey homeward was a silent one, Mr. White's few conversational efforts being met by frigid monosyllables. Miss Claxton was repeating over and over in her mind every word that the old woman had said. Of her companion's identity with the young man who had been "mackerelin' with 'Siah," and "jilted Eldory Jordan," there could be no question. Had she not seen his name—Clarence Howard White—in a book which he lent her, and had he not told her that he was always called Howard by his friends? They had wondered that he never appeared in the hotel parlor; that was accounted for now. It was strange that Parker Jessop should not have known of his position; but perhaps he did know. He was not likely to be aristocratic in his proclivities.

After all, what did it matter? It would be an easy matter to drop his acquaintance. Miss Claxton assured herself that it was a matter of utter indifference to her.

But a wind was blowing up from the sea, bringing the fog in its train, and the fog was shrouding everything in its damp chilling folds. That depressed her spirits! She was very thankful when they reached the house, and she was able to reach her room without facing the unbounded horror and unlimited questions of her aunt.

Early the next morning a letter was brought her, addressed in Mr. White's handwriting. She flushed and paled by turns, as she turned it over and over in her hands. Her prophetic soul told her that Mr. White's interrupted expressions of sentiment had found vent on paper. At one moment she almost tore open the envelope, her face flushed, her eyes radiant; the next she drew herself haughtily up, and, with her face grown white and set, declared aloud that she "wondered at the man's insolence."

In the solitude of her own room Miss Claxton repeated these rather extraordinary manœuveres several times. As a final she rang for a servant, and sent the letter back to Mr. White, unopened. Then she sought her aunt with a proposal that they should leave Mt. Desert that day.

Mrs. Sedley was surprised, but she was a woman who accommodated herself easily to surprises. She had found Mt. Desert a howling wilderness, socially speaking, and the weather-wise predicted one of the long seasons of fog. She was more than willing to take her immediate departure; and Miss Beatrice regarded with only a mild regret the abrupt termination of her flirtation with Mr. Parker Jessop.

And they sailed away on the steamer Lewiston that very day, without a word of farewell to Mr. White.

The next summer, at Cape May, Miss Claxton suddenly heard a well-remembered voice near her on the veranda, and, turning, she saw Mr. White.

"You are looking at that *distingue* Mr. White," said Mrs. Maclise, a Philadelphia gossip, who knew everybody. "His mother was a Howard, and he gets his looks from her; the bluest blood in the country too; and his grandfather has just left him a mint of money. It's no wonder"——

But Miss Claxton was just putting a cold and trembling hand into Mr. White's, and struggling for self-possession as their eyes met.

"We left Bar Harbor so—so unexpect-

edly! I had no opportunity to say good-by," she stammered.

He murmured a commonplace, about having been very sorry not to see her, scarcely more composed than she.

"I returned your letter unopened, but it was all a wretched mistake! If you only knew," she murmured.

"I am glad to know that it was a mistake. We will let bygones be bygones; and will you let me introduce my wife to you?" he said.

"A pretty little creature, Howard White's wife, isn't she?" said Mrs. Maclise, as Miss Claxton met her in the hall a few minutes later. They have only just returned from their wedding tour. Did you say you had met him before?" with a curious look at her white face.

The next day Miss Claxton threw into the sea a withered bouquet, in a dainty pitcher-plant cup. She watched it dancing over the waves, and wished it would sink; but it did not, and presently a returning wave tossed it at her feet.

"I knew that when such a thing came to me I should never get rid of it," she said.

But whether she meant the bouquet, or something else, will never be known to any one but herself.

"ROAD-AGENTS."

TRAVELING into the Black Hills on a Pullman sleeper to-day presents a marked contrast to the manner we came in, in the old times, when the nearest railroad was two hundred and fifty miles from Deadwood. But what memories are stirred up within the breasts of those pioneers who fought Indians, braved hardships, encountered "road-agents," or highwaymen, as they are called in more civilized countries, and lived on bacon, game, and slap-jacks! Yes, the old days are gone, never to return; so are the road-agents or stage-robbers; and the visitor now can listen to the yarns of the old-timers as he travels to and fro comfortably seated in the cars without feeling his hair raise the hat off his head, as would have been the case in years gone by. He feels no nervousness now as his informant tells him of Lame Johnny, who was hanged near this railroad station; and of Jim Wall and Dunc Blackburn, who often hid for days in the woods, back of the town which is now the terminus of the railroad. He can laugh, too, at the idea of a stage-company hiring these very men to refrain from attacking the coaches, which, strange as it may seem, is an actual fact. The company made money by doing so too, because, while the coaches on the other roads were held-up, sometimes every night for a week at a time, this company gained the reputation of being the safest to travel by, and consequently got the most of the passengers, besides many thousand dollars in gold-dust.

One of the favorite stories told of the exploits of road-agents is that relating to the mysterious killing of a stage-driver named Johnny Slaughter within four miles of Deadwood in April, 1877. The coach had left Cheyenne, on the Union Pacific Railroad, about three hundred miles distant from Deadwood, with a full load of male passengers, many of them on their first trip in the West. Some old-timers who occupied outside seats had enlivened the long tedious journey across the plains of Wyoming by relating stories of hair-breadth escapes from Indians and road-agents, until the nerves of the pilgrims or "tenderfeet" were strung to the highest pitch. As they found their journey nearing its end without accident, they regained their usual flow of spirits; and when, fifty miles from Deadwood, Johnny Slaughter took the reins, each one was ready to persuade himself that the old-timers had been yarning to them. Usually, a Western stage-driver takes a delight in keeping the ball rolling, so far as working on the nervousness of his male passengers, by corroborating every story they have told to them, no matter how far-fetched the narrative may be. But in this instance the ribbons were handled by a man whose reputation was, that he always tried to allay any fears his passengers might entertain. He had driven stage in the mountains and on the plains so long without molestation, was so fearless himself and light-hearted, although he knew perfectly well that many a desperado had threatened to "do him up" if a good chance presented, that his presence on the driver's

seat seemed to impart confidence to the most timid of his passengers. It was generally believed that if Johnny's coach were ever "held-up," he would never stop unless wounded or killed outright. In this particular he was differently constituted from most stage-drivers, who usually throw on the brake and stop the team at the first order to "halt," considering that they are not paid to take chances of being shot.

No wonder, then, that this coach-load, who had all heard of Johnny Slaughter, should have been enjoying the last fifty miles of their long ride more than any other portion of the journey. The scenery was becoming more picturesque and varied as the road wound in snake-like twists and sharp curves along the banks of a swiftly-running mountain stream, or over the top of a rugged rocky mountain, or through dense pine forests, and across beautiful natural parks, having every appearance of the watchful care of the professional forester. Daylight was giving place to dusky twilight as the coach neared the mouth of Gold Run Gulch, one of the tributaries of Whitewood Creek, on which Deadwood is located, when, without the least note of warning, the report of a rifle-shot reverberated through the canon, and Johnny Slaughter fell from his seat, pierced through the heart by the assassin's bullet. His reputation for never halting did not desert him at this critical moment, for, as he fell, he passed the reins to the passenger seated beside him. The team, four spirited, half-broken mustangs, took fright at the shot, and started to run at the top of their speed. In a short time the coach-load of frightened passengers stopped at the stage office, where the usual crowd of frontiersmen were gathered to see its arrival. The word was passed that Johnny Slaughter lay near the mouth of Gun Run pierced by a bullet. In an incredibly short space of time a posse of well-armed, determined men had started on horseback to avenge his death, and others in a wagon to fetch in his body. It was found that the cruel bullet had pierced his heart, and caused almost instantaneous death. But no trace of his murderer has ever been discovered. A thorough search was made on the night of the murder, as well as a thorough canvass of the whereabouts of the desperadoes to whom the finger of suspicion might point. The assassination is to-day, thirteen years after its occurrence, still enshrouded in mystery.

Funny incidents, as well as sad and tragical like the foregoing, we can also call to mind in reviewing the exploits of the road-agents. One night in '79 the court stenographer for the Black Hills District was returning from a visit to the States, and the agents halted the coach. He was a very small man, and in order to enjoy a talk with the driver, had climbed to the seat next to that dignitary. His feet would not reach the footboard of the boot, so to prevent any sudden lurch of the coach from unseating him, the friendly driver had passed a red surcingle around his chest under his arms and buckled it at the back of the seat. When the "halt" was given, the short stenographer was noticed by the robber who demanded the mail-sacks and treasure-box—or pie-box, as we used to call this. "Never mind getting down, Bubby"—a favorite expression used when addressing a young boy in the West—"we ain't making war on kids, so you can stay where you are." This offended the dignity of the court official, who resented the remark by answering: "If I had a gun I would show you that I am no kid." "Well, then," was the robber's reply, "if that is so, just hand down your watch and money, and be lively about it too." This demand was quickly complied with, for the glistening barrel of a heavy revolver in the hands of the road-agent pointed directly at the little fellow's breast was a powerful persuader. Several months afterwards, this very watch was the means of convicting one of that gang, and sending him to a penitentiary.

At another time, an Eastern man, with more courage than discretion, when told to alight from the inside of a coach, commenced shooting at the brawny thief who was searching the passengers with a small pocket-pistol, the report from which sounded like the noise made by the small boys' fireworks on Independence day. "If one of those pills hit me, and I find it out," said the road-agent, as he unconcernedly proceeded with his search of another passenger's clothing, "it will go hard with you."

Evidently, these stage-robbers of our own day had read of the gallantry of Dick Turpin and Claude Duval in their treatment of ladies, for it was no unusual occurence for these modern knights of the stage-road to demand a kiss in consideration of allowing lady passengers to pass on without loss of jewelery and pocket-book.

THE GIFT OF LIFE.

FOUNDED ON FACT.

ON a dreary November afternoon I was having tea with one of the most successful artists of the day. His studio was a large, richly furnished room with a profusion of beautiful things about it. There were heavy curtains, long low divans, and stuffs and scents from the East, and nowhere a sign of hard work or struggle; even the palettes and the half-finished portraits seemed to exist merely for the sake of adding an extra dash of color to the whole effect.

My host, a tall, handsome man of genial manner, had that air of boundless leisure which belongs sometimes to the most energetic natures. The world said he had sold himself for money, that his earlier works promised a richness of feeling and fancy which could hardly find expression in highly paid reproductions of fashionable women. I was never sure if he realized this, for no one was apparently less troubled by regrets than he. On this particular evening, however, we had branched into a discussion on the possible strength and depth of artistic feeling, and I maintained, perhaps too bitterly, that the true fire was stifled by money and luxury. I forgot for the moment how much of what I said might apply directly to the man lounging near me, and as he remained silent, and yet in some intangible way assured me that he was listening, I grew more and more eloquent, and in the heat of my feeling began to walk up and down the room. With more emphasis than originality, I exclaimed that it was the love of art for her own sake which was the true inspiration of the artist, not love of the gold she brought him. "Now-a-days," I declared bitterly, "no one loves her enough to make any sacrifice." I stopped short in front of a small bronze figure which I had never noticed in his rooms before. It stood upon a table in a dark recess, and I could scarcely see it; but with that sudden instinct which warns us now and then that we are close to something great, I carried my prize quickly into the light. It was the figure of a girl, young and strong like a fresh green shoot. She was almost naked, and she was dancing evidently because she could not help it—there was an irresistible gayety and joyousness about her which made one long to dance too. Her delicate head was thrown back as if a laugh were rippling from her lips, and one arm was flung out with a grace that was almost insolent. The other arm was gone.

"Is this an antique?" I cried, impatient for an answer.

"It is curious you should have taken up that thing at this moment," my friend returned thoughtfully. "Look at it again. I think you will say it is not Greek in spite of the inscription."

I examined the enchanting creation once more, and noticed that on the base was written, in Greek characters, ΑΓΑΘΑΙΑ ("The Spirit of Joy").

"That figure was modeled hardly a year ago in Paris," my friend continued, "and the man who imagined it gave his life for it. Would you like to hear the story?"

And before I had time to answer he began the following narrative:—

None of the other artists who lived in the same street, or even those in the same house, knew much of the young sculptor Leroy. He was from the South, and had come to study in Paris; but, unlike all the rest, he never would make any friends or join in the wild pleasure of fellow-workers. It was rumored that he was dreadfully poor; but then so many others were poor and yet led pleasant convivial lives. "No; something else is wrong with Leroy," the artists used to say; "he is either mad or in love." He never asked any one inside his room, and indeed there was nothing much to see, except a very bare garret and a lot of white clay with here and there some lump beginning to take living shape. Leroy's pale, quiet face did not attract people, and he was very soon left to go on his own way. The concierge used to shrug her shoulders when she reached the top story in her gossip over the different intimates of the house, and wonder how the thin, dark-haired fellow lived.

Leroy, for all his melancholy looks and his poverty, more stringent than any one imagined, was happy. His mind was thronged with shapes he longed to put into marble,

and his bare garret formed the back-ground to many wonderful dreams. Sometimes, when he shut the door upon the dark, ugly staircase, and rested a moment in his chair with his eyes closed, the room seemed to fill with beautiful forms, which moved and swayed before him, and he would lean back, watching intently, till at last one above all the rest would entrance his eyes. Then he would strive to imprint every line and curve upon his memory, in a fever lest anything should escape him before that sudden stillness in the air, which always woke him with a shudder to the ugly realities of his life. Over and over again he was disappointed in the attempt to reproduce his vision, and often in despair he broke what he had modeled. But he could not be unhappy while he lived in the world of his dreams, and he never thought of the future. Even after his first shock of finding his little store of money exhausted, he began, without misgiving, to pawn his little possessions, and worked on in the same unhampered way as before. But after a time, when his watch and his clothes, and, finally, even his bedstead, had gone, he found himself growing uncertain. He was at work on a figure of Justice, but the tall, calm woman oppressed him, and she seemed to grow less and less like the majestic shape which had once moved across his sight. Incessantly he tried to conjure her up before him, but in this time of his greatest need his vision seemed to have deserted him. He could think of nothing but poverty and misery, and as he looked bitterly round the empty room, he wondered why so little had come of his love and enthusiasm. There was nothing to show for his dreams—nothing but shapeless clods of clay, and no one but he could know what they might have become. At last, one cold, wet evening as the dark was beginning to set in, Leroy left off working quite dispirited. He leaned back in his one chair, and closed his eyes in a weary despair, wishing the room were warmer, and that he had something beside bread for supper, when suddenly through the dim garret danced the most enchanting being he had ever imagined—a girl so young she might almost be called a child. Her hair was bound with flowers, and a laugh was in her eyes; she seemed the very spirit of youth and joy. He did not know how long he watched her marvelous, irresistible dance. She stood before him at last in one supreme attitude, rivaling all she had been before, and then in an instant she was gone.

Leroy sprang to his feet. Here was an inspiration, here was something which would live forever and bring him immortality also! His warm southern blood, which had got so chilled in Paris, danced again in his veins. He saw the green fields of Provence, the flowers, the deep sky, and the glorious sun flooding everything with light. All this beauty and joy should deck his statue, all this exhilaration of youth and spring.

It was dark, but Leroy did not stop for that. Now, while his eyes still burned with the brightness of their vision, was the time to work. He hurriedly lit his end of candle and drew in bold strokes an outline of the dancing nymph as he had last seen her. The sketch was rapidly made, and Leroy threw himself on his mattress at once, not to sleep, but to dream. Through his uncurtained window he could see the night lit for him by one star. This time he felt more certain than ever before. He could recall every feature, every movement of the spirit; he already knew exactly how he should immortalize her. Models! He could not afford to pay models, but if he could get the best in Paris he would not have them. No one but he had ever beheld such a vision, and the coarser types of earth would only mar the magic outline he could see so plainly.

The next few days were the great days in Leroy's life. Never had his heart and brain and hand moved so harmoniously together as the clay took form under his dexterous fingers; he hardly knew how he had won such sudden power and strength. The only fear which stood behind him as he worked was that he should fall ill and be unable to finish his statue. He pawned the blanket off his mattress, and there was nothing left to cover him at night but an old quilt his mother had made him. But he felt neither cold nor hunger; he was peaceful with a great inward happiness, as hour by hour his joy became more tangible.

One morning the sculptor woke to find the world all white, and a deadly chill in his room. An intense cold had set in, and that just as he had reached the most critical stage of his work; one more day and the clay would stand the frost; but now, cold was his great enemy. He hardly dared examine his model lest the night should already have undone his labor. So far, however, all was well; but the room must be kept up to a good

heat, or the clay would crack and the figure be spoilt. Leroy took his bedding and pawned it. It was so old he got next to nothing for it, but he spent all he did get on firing, and rushed back to the garret, fearful of losing a moment. Very soon he had a roaring fire in the stove, and the concierge who saw him kneeling before the blaze, noted the store of coal and wood, and concluded that he had earned some money, and that she need not feel uncomfortable about him when she ate her good warm dinner.

All day long Leroy worked almost savagely, never stopping for an instant except to build up the fire; but when the twilight came he was content to stop, for he knew that he had succeeded—the Spirit of Joy was imprisoned in clay for him.

He stepped back to look at her with a sigh of relief, and she utterly satisfied him. There was nothing wanting; no single grace had been missed; she stood before him exactly as she had done in his vision.

How he loved her! How beautiful she was! But he could not look at her long; he began to shiver, and turned to the fire. It was almost out! Not a scrap of wood or coal was left; he had burnt even his chair. Leroy felt as if some miracle must happen to save his work; it was impossible that, after he had given everything, she his wonderful, light-footed spirit, should not live. One night more and she would be safe. But what could be done? How could she be kept warm? It was beginning to turn bitterly cold already, and Leroy knew too well what a cold night would mean in that garret.

The counterpane which his mother had given him was lying in the corner where his mattress had been. With a sudden thought he picked it up, and wrapped the ragged patchwork carefully round the head and shoulders of the Spirit of Joy. Contrive as he would, he could not manage to cover her quite; her dancing feet and one lovely arm were still left bare. There was nothing for it but to take his coat off and wrap it tenderly round her knees.

"Her arm must must take care of itself," he said with a faint smile.

Now that he could no longer see the joyous figure, all his elation left him. He tried to keep warm by walking up and down the room, but he could hardly move his legs. He had had no food all day, and very little for many days; a numbness was fastening on his limbs, and there was nothing for him to do.

"If she and I can only live till to-morrow," he thought, "all will be well." To-morrow he would make the biggest dealer in Paris come and look at his statue—a dealer who should give him money for the marble he would chisel himself, and later on at the Saloon every one would recognize that a new thing had been born into the world.

It was very lonely and dreary, and he went to the door and opened it on the chance of stray comfort; but the staircase was dark and silent as usual.

When the room was full of moonlight he grew happier again. "It will soon be over—this cold night," he said, "and then we shall be safe." He took up his chisel and scratched in Greek letters on the pedestal, "Ayyaia," and then he lifed the covering for a moment and kissed the little clay feet.

He did not feel cold or hungry any longer, only very tired, and he sat down on the floor in a corner of the room and leaned his back against the wall. He closed his eyes, and his reward came to him. For one radiant moment his Vision gleamed before him—he saw her! he knew her! Then he fell asleep.

And the cold crept farther and farther into the silent garret, and cracked the little bits of clay lying about on the floor and frosted the window panes. But it breathed lightly on the draped figure, almost passing it by, and found a man leaning half-clothed against the wall. It stopped the blood in his veins, crawled up beyond his heart and fastened his eyelids down.

When the sun looked into the window next morning there was absolute stillness in the room. Leroy's spirit had followed the Spirit of Joy, and nothing was left but his body and the clay statue.

There were people who came and understood the story. They took off the counterpane and the coat, and the beautiful nymph stood before them. But, because nothing in this world may be quite perfect, one arm had broken off in the night.

EXILES IN HEAVY CHAINS.

SETTING OUT FROM ROSTOFF FOR THE TRAMP TO SIBERIA.

RUSSIAN provincial cities are all very much alike. When the traveler has spent a few days in one of them he has become acquainted with the chief features of all, writes Thomas Stevens in *Truth*, Toronto, Ont. There are rows of shops, badly paved and badly lighted streets; churches of overshadowing size and splendor; the Governor's mansion, if the city is the capital; a hospital; a big white stone prison; an open space with rude wooden stalls, where peasants congregate with wagon-loads of produce that they have driven in to sell, and cheap goods are sold by petty dealers. There are one or more hotels, which may or may not be worthy of the name, and a public garden where a military band dispenses music on summer evenings, and the elite of the city congregate to listen, gossip, smoke cigarettes and drink tea. In the capital cities there is also pretty sure to be a triumphal arch or two in imitation of those at St. Petersburg and Moscow.

One of the finest cities in Southern Russia is Rostoff, at the mouth of the Don. It contains about one hundred thousand inhabitants and has the reputation of being one of the pleasantest cities in Russia to live in. The Grand Hotel there is exceptionally good for a Russian provincial city, and the public garden adjoining was an additional recommendation. What inward satisfaction at having tumbled into quarters so pleasant and so unexpected! I was seated in my room, from which a balcony overlooked the main street, about two hours after my arrival, when my attention was aroused by a great jingling of chains without. Four years before, I had heard a similar sound in Tiflis, capital of the Caucasus, but it had long passed from memory, save as a casual reminiscence of that city. Four years, crammed with incident, had passed since I had heard the same sound, yet "Tiflis" and "shackled convicts" was the first and immediate picture that presented itself. I stepped upon the balcony. Filing slowly past the hotel was a convoy of about two hundred prisoners, marching between two rows of policemen with drawn swords. Hastening down and out I mingled with the little crowd of curious spectators who were keeping pace with the convoy, which I judged was on its way to the railway station, half a mile distant. The pace of the shackled convicts was a funeral one. It took twenty minutes, and then another half hour loading them into the prison-vans of the train.

It was the first regularly organized convoy of exiles bound for Siberia that I had happened upon during my journeying in Russia; hence, as may be imagined, every face in the mournful company was scanned with the keenest interest, and everything connected with its embarkation minutely observed. I had followed the convicts to the station. Three-fourths of them were clad in the regulation suit issued to exiles on their departure for Siberia; the rest wore the rags and tags of the lower stratum of Russian life. Those in the prison dress wore their big, course gray overcoats, though it was the middle of a hot August day, in which respect, however, they were following one of those customs of the country that are a puzzle to the foreigner. The overcoats were ornamented, though hardly beautified, by diamonds of yellow cloth on their backs. The men's heads were shaved on one side, and covered by little, round, peakless caps of the same material as the overcoats. Most of them had leg-chains which were riveted to heavy iron fetters around the ankles. The weight of the ankle-rings was relieved by means of supporting traps or garters above the calves, and a leather belt around the waist supported the weight of the chains. Much attention had been given by the convicts to the subject of protecting their ankles from the iron fetters. In addition to the leg bandages provided for this purpose by the authorities, many had procured old boot-tops which they had drawn on over them before submitting them to the delicate attention of the prison blacksmith. Several, who were evidently better off than the majority and had been permitted to indulge their "pride of purse," wore elegant top-boots that seemed wofully out of joint in the disreputable company of chains and fetters. Some few men were without leg-fetters, but were hand-

cuffed two together. A few feeble-looking old men slouched along without either chains or bracelets. Following behind were several women and children, wives and families who were voluntarily accompanying husbands and fathers into exile. Last of all were several wagons containing sacks of baggage, sick prisoners and more women and children.

The company seemed to have been collected from the four quarters of European Russia, and presented a rare study of types and faces. It was a strange company that had been thrown together there on the streets of Rostoff by the inscrutable workings of the Russian administration. It seemed to me that I could easily have gone among them, and by merely glancing at their faces sorted out those who deserved Siberia and those who didn't. Here were old jail-birds plainly bearing the mark of Cain, and young peasants who looked so unsophisticated and innocent that one felt sure their crime, whatever it might be, was the outcome of ignorance rather that guilt, or, worse still, that they were innocent victims of the monstrously iniquitous criminal system of the country. There were broken-spirited convicts, pale as ghosts from long confinement, and bronzed moujiks seemingly just dragged from the harvest fields. There was a pale-faced, miserable-looking young fellow, whom I took to be a student, handcuffed to a man old enough to be his grandfather; and beside them strode a splendid Cossack, the most striking figure in the convoy. This Cossack was over six feet tall, and was not a common criminal. His bearing was unconsciously proud, but not defiant. Had he been otherwise than humbly submissive in demeanor, he would probably have been wearing the same unlovely gray garb as the man at his elbow. As it was, for reasons better known to himself and the prison officials than to me, he was permitted to retain his picturesque Cossack costume. He was evidently a man not without means. His dress was even rich, though without ornament, and but for the shackles on his brand new boots and the barbarously half-shaven head that his lamb's wool hat attempted vainly to conceal, he might have mingled with the onlookers on the sidewalk, a well-to-do Cossack gentleman. I felt more sympathy for this man than for any of the others.

Among the unshackled few was a poor old man, who, probably from a long term of solitary confinement, neglected for years in some provincial prison, had become an idiot. Owing to his condition he seemed to be regarded as a sort of privileged character, a "trusty," from whom no thoughts of escape were to be apprehended. He wore the prison cap, but sported a rusty and dilapidated velvet coat, walked barefooted, and had a bundle of something as big as a pillow tucked under his canvas shirt. He seemed to take no notice whatever of his surroundings, but walked mechanically along like one in a dream or with a mind altogether vacant. Some of the convicts looked concerned and downcast, but the majority appeared to be in very good spirits. Those whose pale faces betrayed the fact that they had spent some time in prison looked the most unhappy. I wondered at this, for it seemed to me that the change from a prison to the road and Siberia would have been appreciated. Probably it was. Their miserable expression was doubtless due to long confinement.

They had forgotten how to smile, and their faces, grown accustomed to a look of hopeless melancholy, were no longer equal to the exaltation of heart or mind, be it never so little. Each of the convicts carried some sort of bundle containing their small belongings. Some carried hunks of black rye bread under their arms.

Their escort appeared to me to take superfluous percautions against escape. Seeing that all the able-bodied convicts were either handcuffed two together or rescued from hurried movement by the heavy leg-shackles, the chances of escape were altogether nil. Policemen went ahead to clear the street and to warn everybody to keep at a respectful distance. Part of the escort watched the convicts and the others watched the spectators, who, keeping the sidewalks, followed them along. Each wagon had its special guards, and other policemen brought up the rear. Every policeman carried a drawn sword, besides being armed with revolvers.

The convict cars are ordinary, third-class carriages, with iron bars over the windows. Five of these were in readiness at the station. Here the vigilance of the escort seemed to be doubled, and there appeared on the scene other policemen and an officer who weighed about three hundred pounds. This gentleman's girth, large as it was, but feebly represented the size of his own importance as indicated by the usual well-known deportment and bearing. Assuming the poor

wretch in the rusty velvet coat to personify human insignificance, this officer who deigned to drive down to the station at the last moment and appear on the scene, would represent the extreme limit of human grandeur and official importance. Not a speck could have been discovered, even with a microscope, on the immaculate white gloves and white cap of this man, nor on his new looking uniform and patent leather boots. Surely he was driven to the station in a band-box and carefully deposited on the platform for the spectators to admire, and to dazzle and inspire with awe the departing convicts. He did nothing but slyly examine the spectators from beneath the drawn down peak of his cap, but whether it was the scrutiny of a detective or of a human peacock feeding in vanity, who could tell?

The convicts were put into the cars, and buckets of water were brought for them to fill their drinking-pots. The train pulled slowly out, and as one car after another filed past, a picture long to be remembered was the faces of the convicts peering through the iron gratings and the armed guard standing erect inside the doors at either end. The demeanor of the spectators was a reflection of that of the convicts. Some appeared concerned, but the majority indifferent. Now and then some sympathetic person would attempt to hand a convict a coin, but they were always warned away by the guards. One woman, who was a relative or friend of one of the exiles, persevered to the end in her effort to give money to him; but the guards would neither permit it nor would any of them accept it and pass it to the convict.

A few hours after the departure of the convict train, with its load of human woe, misery and degradation, of hopeless hearts and despairing human souls, found me a spectator and a participator in Rostoff's happier side. It was ten o'clock in the evening; two military bands discoursed sweet music from bandstands at either end of a pretty avenue, down which streamed a dense throng of people. Well nigh all Rostoff must have been gathered in the public garden and well nigh all Rostoff's Sunday clothes.

Though so much alike, towns in Russia, as in other countries, have their local peculiarities, time-honored customs of the people. And a peculiarity that arrested my attention in the public garden of Rostoff was two counter files of human beings along one of the cross avenues, one file composed of males the other of females. The files were of young people, two together, who usually linked arms. The streams passed at close quarters, and the young men examined critically the counter stream of young women craning their necks and peering in their faces most impertinently by the half-light of the petroleum lamps.

The chief glory of the Rostoff ladies was their hair. Two-thirds were bare-headed, a sensible and pretty custom on summer evenings, and nearly all possessed luxuriant tresses, But they were wise in submitting their faces for scrutiny in the kindly half-light of the lamps. They looked really beautiful.

By daylight a casual gathering of Russian ladies will average about one-third as much beauty as would be found among the same number of Canadian ladies. Certainly not more.

IDLE BUILDER.

BY ELIZABETH JANETTE COOPER.

OF what are you dreaming, my dear,
As you sit in the fire's soft glow,
With a strange sweet smile on your fair young face,
And your silken lashes drooping down low?

Methinks, as I look from the half-written page,
To thy form in the shadowy sheen,—
Of shadows that gather and firelights that fall,
And the delicate flush that lights up between,—

You're dreaming the dream all maidens dream,
And living the same sweet spell,
With its fragrance of love and its magical words,
That no life or lips ever tell.

LONDON, OHIO.

A NERVOUS MAN'S STORY.

BY N. P. DARLING.

"A GREAT many people come to Pokerville in the summer season?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you've always taken four boarders?"

"Yes, until this season."

"But for forty dollars per week you will promise to take no boarder beside myself, and endeavor to keep it as quiet as possible?"

"Well, my sister, I told you, would be here part of the time."

"Ah, yes, the widow; a quiet woman, I suppose?"

"Very."

"You understand that I am very nervous, exceedingly so, I may say, madam."

"Yes, sir."

"I must have quiet, perfect quiet. You keep no hens or ducks?"

"No, sir."

"I wish to have everything around me in a state of perfect repose. You have no children about the house at any time?"

"No, sir."

"Of course you keep no dogs? They are apt to create discordant sounds at night—cats in the same category."

"None of either." Here Mrs. Quobog smiled, but as it was subdued in a measure, it did not jar upon my nervous system so harshly as it often does.

"Then I think we shall get along very well together, Mrs. Quobog. Your husband seems to be a very quiet man for a farmer. Bid him speak as softly as possible to his cattle when near the house. You perceive that I am so very nervous that the slightest noise is often enough to make me wild?"

"Yes, sir."

"I shall come this evening with my baggage. Shall probably be here to take tea with you. Am not very particular about my food if it is only placed upon the table in good order. Order is heaven's first law. Anything else disturbs my nervous system. I do not wish to meet with anything that will either offend my eyes or ears, the latter especially."

"Yes, sir."

"Good-morning, ma'am."

Mrs. Quobog made a courtesy. "Good-morning, sir."

"Madam, your dress hangs very peculiarly. Never make a courtesy when you wear that. It, ahem—it jars my optic nerve."

Here I bowed myself out of the room, leaving Mrs. Quobog covered with blushes.

Reader, I am desperate, otherwise I should not tell you this story. It may do no good, I have no hope that it will. But I must relieve myself. I want the symathy of some one. Still I feel that there are very few who can understand or appreciate my sufferings. Very few know what it is to be a nervous man, or, at least, so nervous as I am.

To the best of my calculations I am thirty-four years of age. I am a man of property. When, by the advice of Doctor Sangrado, I retired to the very retired village of Pokerville, I was considered the most wealthy old bachelor in our State.

Doctor Sangrado advised me to leave the city for two months. "Get some quiet place in the country," said he, "and I shall not be surprised if you come back perfectly recovered, if you can only manage to keep quiet while away."

"And where shall I go?" I asked.

"Pokerville. Most quiet little town in the Union. Pretty place too. You can board with Mrs. Quobog, a very fine woman, I assure you. Take the whole house and exclude all other boarders, and it will be your salvation, Mr. Delancy."

There, now you understand why I came to Pokerville. Mrs. Quobog lived two miles from the village. The house was situated at the end of a green, shady lane, some distance from the main road. Our nearest neighbor was a mile distant. Mr. Quobog was a very quiet man, and the lady moved about the house as softly as though her silppers were made of butterfly's wings.

The house was of a very common fashion among New England farmers—large, square, two-story, with immense chimneys painted white with black trimmings. The rooms were large but low. The two that I occupied were situated at the north end of the house. My parlor, which I furnished myself with due regard to good taste, so that nothing could offend the eye, looked out upon the

front door-yard and the aforesaid green lane, which being always very cold and shady, possessed wondrous power to quiet my nerves. My bedroom, situated directly back of my parlor, and also furnished by myself and adorned with several pictures of a soothing nature, looked out upon a glossy lake. I mean by that, that the lake was glossy whenever I looked upon it. At such times as I supposed the waves would be running "mountain high," I never allowed myself to look upon it. I am not fond of nature in her wildest forms.

Taken as a whole my retreat was all that could be expected. Mrs. Quobog did every thing that she could to make all things pleasant to me. She even trained her facial muscles to smile in one particular way, every time the same, saving me the horror (nervous horror) of looking upon any unexpected contortions of her features. She carried a tuning-fork and always pitched her voice to a certain key when addressing me. Her husband took an octave lower so that there should be no discord. But there was one thing, the singing of the birds, which I had to tolerate whether it pleased me or not. With this single exception, I found nothing during the first week of my stay there but what was really pleasant. My nerves were certainly growing stronger.

Doctor Sangrado came down to see me during the second week. He was somehow related to the Quobogs—fourteenth cousin, I think. Then he married a Pokerville woman, a very fine woman too, I assure you. He stopped in the village, but generally called upon me once a day.

"Delancy, my dear fellow," said he, one morning, "you are really improving."

"I think so too, doctor, and I don't know how I can thank you for sending me down to this quiet retreat," I replied.

"I am glad you like the place so well, Delancy. In a short time I hope to see you quite restored."

"Thank you for your kind wishes, doctor, but perfectly restored, I never expect to be—I shall always be a nervous man."

"Oh, yes, yes, I don't suppose that your nerves will ever be quite so strong as they were when I first knew you; but still you will be able to enjoy life and attend to your business as of old, and, in fact, regain the name you had before your late sickness, of being the most jolly old bachelor in the State. I used to envy you, Delancy."

It is needless to say that the doctor was a married man. I don't want any one to think that I am casting any slur upon matrimony, upon the fair sex in general, or the doctor's wife in particular. By no means. As I remarked before, the doctor's wife was a very fine woman. A woman that any man might have been proud of; and the doctor would have been as proud of her had she been some other man's wife, and possibly just as happy. I am proud of every beautiful and intelligent American woman. My bosom swells with pride every time I look upon one of the fair creatures. I don't want you to suppose that in bosom swelling I am trying to imitate the frog who envied the size of the ox—by no means. No, it is only with pride. And I have seen the time when I should have been proud to have called one of them—yes, a dozen, if the dear creatures wished it—wife.

The doctor tarried in Pokerville a week and then returned to the city. I had now stettled down into as perfect contentment as a nervous man can. To be sure, I missed the doctor, for though quiet was absolutely necessary to me, I longed for some one to converse with occasionally, therefore I formed the habit of walking out once a day, down the green lane, and sometimes taking a green, shady path that led through the woods and came out by a little brook just in sight of the spires of Pokerville. This was a very romantic spot, and the musical murmur of the brooklet had a soothing effect upon my nervous system, very grateful to me.

As I said, I had no one to converse with, and so I came to this quiet, beautiful place to commune with Nature. I did not exactly understand the *modus operandi*, you see, but having heard of people who did go out into the fields and woods to commune with Nature, I thought I would go out and see if I couldn't strike up a conversation with the old lady.

It was on the morning of the tenth day of August 18—, that for the fifth time I sallied out for the purpose of communing with Nature. It was just such a morning as shines perhaps once in a hundred years—some centuries these mornings come as often as three or four times I've heard, but I don't remember any such. I threw myself upon the grass at the foot of an old oak, the identical tree that the woodman spared, and was just wishing that old Mother Nature would appear, when lo! and behold she came.

I was surprised and disappointed, but agreeably so, for I had understood from one or two books of poetry that I had read, but which I confess I didn't understand at all, that she was an elderly lady of benign aspect. But, on the contrary, to all appearance, she was not over thirty, and I confess that I felt my bosom swell with pride as I gazed upon her, for she was certainly very beautiful.

The lady had almost reached me before I was observed. When she did perceive me she remarked—"Oh!" in such a shrill treble that I was fearful that my nerves would never recover from the shock.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am," said I, rising and lifting my hat. "I had really no right to intrude upon your grounds."

"My grounds?" The lady was smiling and blushing in a very bewitching manner.

"Why, yes," I answered; and then I thought I might be mistaken in the lady.

"You are—ah—I if I mistake not, you are"—— I hesitated about pronouncing the name, as any one natuarlly would in the presence of the lady herself.

"Oh, my name is Anna"——

"Ah, I see," interrupting her—"Animated Nature—exactly. I felt sure it must be you."

The lady laughed.

"You are facetious, I see, Mr. Delancy."

I stared. "You know my name?"

"Do I not? But you do not know me. I only arrived last night. I am Mrs. Quobog's sister, Mrs. Biddimugs of Thimbleton. Excuse me for intruding upon you; I did not know you had left the house."

"No intrusion at all, ma'am. In fact, I was just wishing for some one to talk to. I came out to commune with Nature, and at first I took you for her."

Here Mrs. Biddimugs smiled again. Yes, she laughed right out. Singular as it may seem, there was something soothing to me in her silvery laugh. It was truly wonderful, but nevertheless true that every "snicker" seemed to make my nerves more steady.

"Well, shall I take her place?" she asked, with bewitching simplicity.

"I shall consider it a favor."

Mrs. Biddimugs seated herself upon the grass by the side of the stream and I sat down beside her. Methinks my bosom was swelling with something more than pride as I gazed upon her. We talked. I cannot tell you what our conversation was about. Something or nothing, it don't matter which. I liked to listen to the soft tones of her voice. I could have set there beside her—I was going to say forever, but I don't believe in using such large hyperboles. I will say this, though, that I forgot that I had any nerves. We walked up to the house together, to the great surprise of our landlady.

I merely answered the questioning look in her eyes, by saying that my health had greatly improved since I came to Pokerville, leaving the rest to be explained by Mrs. Biddimugs, immediately seeking my own room.

I am a practical, matter-of-fact man, and therefore shall not go into ecstasies and recount to you our home life for the next few weeks.

I told you that the first weeks of my stay in Pokerville were pleasant, and that I was as contented as a nervous man could be. Of the weeks after Mrs. Biddimugs came I must confess that I was happy. I felt that such another woman was not to be found in the whole world. (I know this is a great statement, but I will take off one square foot.) She seemed to understand me exactly—to understand just what a nervous man required, and she did all that she could do for me under the circumstances. When I wished to be quiet, she never spoke, and she moved about the house as softly as an angel might, if one of 'em should happen to land here.

As time flew by I found more and more how necessary she was becoming to me. How could I do without her? As I asked myself that question an idea struck me. (This is worthy of note, being a very uncommon occurence.) Should I marry her? Would she accept me? How strange that I had never thought of this before. But remember that I was a bachelor and thirty-four. A man that had never loved. Could I say that now?

I took the subject into serious consideration at once. I had numerous reasons, as every old bachelor does, I suppose, why I shouldn't marry, but there was just one reason why I should, which was, that I really felt that I could not do without this woman. It is hard for me to make this confession. But it is true nevertheless.

I came to a conclusion at length. I would propose, let the consequences be what they might. If she rejected me, although it would be a great shock to my nervous system, still,

I thought with a strong constitution I might survive. At least, I felt that I must know my fate.

The twenty-fifth day of September, 18—, I shall probably never forget. My reasons for remembering it you will find below.

I think it was about three o'clock of the afternoon of the aforesaid day that I found myself seated in the old place beside the brook, beneath the old oak tree. I fancy Mrs. Biddimugs suspected or expected something,—they read us so easily, these women.

I did not dare to look at her. I think my voice trembled when I began. I addressed her by a name that I had never used before.

"Anna," said I, "do you know that in the short time I have been here, you have become, as it were, a part of my life? Do you know that I can never be happy again until I can call you my own?" I heard a soft sigh which encouraged me. "Anna, darling, dearest, will you be mine, my own wife?"

The next instant she was in my arms, and Jeremiah the Nervous Man was showering hot kisses upon those red, red lips.

There, I wish I had nothing more to say. But I must finish my story. My duty compels me to go on, though the remainder of my tale contains the most harrowing horror that ever harrowed the heart of man. Cold shivers are playing "hide and seek" up and down my spinal column while I write, and the perspiration rolls down my face as though it were a bowling alley.

We were married. Of course we had a quiet wedding. Anna had a few friends and relations there, but I had none of the latter. In fact, my relations thought it very unkind in me to marry at all. I don't know but my relatives were quite right.

The marriage ceremony having been performed, we were now all in readiness to start upon our wedding tour. The carriage drove up the green lane in hot haste.

I was sitting in the back parlor alone with my wife; but when she heard the sound of carriage wheels she hurried out of the room. Under ordinary circumstances I should have followed her, but to-day I was feeling uncommonly nervous, and I felt that I must keep as quiet as possible, or I should—well, fly all to pieces, perhaps.

I sat there, hardly daring to think of my great happiness, lest I should wake to find it all a dream. I heard footsteps approaching the door. A premonition of something awful filled my soul and I trembled violently. The door flew open—a crash followed by a cry and then a general rush—six small voices crying out "Papa!" Twelve little arms around me, in my hair, pulling my whiskers, around my neck; and all the time those six voices shouting "Papa!" with all the power of six pairs of lungs; and over all, my new-made wife looking on with smiling countenance. What a fix for a nervous man! I think I was wild. I tore myself away from them and confronted my wife.

"Woman!" I screamed, "whose brats are these?"

"Dear husband, these beautiful children are ours."

"Ours!"

"Ours, love. Six of them ranging from four to ten years of age, and all of the feminine gender."

"Six!"

"Six, dear. Three pairs of twins. Remember the Bible injuction: Multiply."

"Ye gods!" I cried, tearing my hair.

"Jeremiah, my husband, do be quiet. Of course, knowing you to be a very nervous man, I expected some slight ebullition, but you are going beyond the bounds of reason."

"Woman! I think you did too," I yelled, in despair.

"But I loved you so, Jerry." My wife began to cry here, at the same time throwing herself upon my bosom. "I loved you—and—and (sob) I—I could—could—couldn't — (sob) do without you; (boo-hoo) and you know dar—darling (sob) that there's nothing like having a good—good (sob) start in life; and (boo-hoo) I'm sure you (sob) can't say that you haven't got star—start enough."

I had nothing more to say.

REDPATH.

A ROMANCE OF EARLY FRONTIER LIFE.

BY DR. J. H. ROBINSON.

CHAPTER VIII.

MIGNON MEETS RAVENCLAW.

MIGNON loved liberty. Nothing could be more repugnant to her feelings than the idea of personal restraint, especially when exercised by a man she detested. To remain with the band and be subject to the authority of Pierre Mariot, was a contingent entirely abhorrent to her notion of her own rights and privileges. It was also at variance with her instinctive delicacy to be brought again into contact with those who already know or mistrusted her sex; who could neither understand her motives nor pity her confusion. To avoid being so awkwardly placed—an object, perchance, of rude comment and ridicule—to evade Mariot's vigilance and escape his domination, became her ruling desire. In the event of success, should she throw herself upon the protection of Brion, or attempt to return home across the wide prairies, attended by Balaam only? The first was not without objections, but it appeared most safe and feasible. Mignon believed it would be best to act upon her determination promptly, while Mariot was still laboring under surprise, before he had artfully deliberated, arranged his plan of action, and systematized his espionage over her conduct.

During her pilgrimage, Mignon had nightly been protected by a small tent, which Balaam had provided for that purpose, and which he was expert in putting up and taking down. The tent had two compartments, in the smaller of which slept Balaam, like a faithful watchdog, ever on the alert, ready to start up for her defence at the first approach of danger. He kindled and kept the fires also, when fires were needful, cooking with skill, preparing the choicest cuts of venison for his adventurous young mistress.

So it will hence be seen that Mignon passed the time, when not on the march, quite by herself, apart from that motley mixture of men composing Callard's band. The services of Balaam were many and important. His advice was always seasonable; she trusted in his sagacity, anticipating protection from his strong arm in every emergency which might occur. He was proud of her confidence, willing to make any sacrifice that human creature could, to ensure her safety and comfort. Balaam was well armed, and hardly it would fare with him who should have the temerity to insult Mignon. He was not wholly indebted to those deadly instruments in vogue, for the means of assault and vengeance, because nature had gifted him with hands of remarkable strength, with which to crush an adversary, and administer corporeal pain. Balaam was of patient, genial disposition, but when a quarrel was forced upon him, and his feelings were outraged, he was an antagonist greatly to be feared. Those so unfortunate as to feel the stunning power of his fist repented their rashness and cared not to provoke his ire again.

Balaam was consulted in reference to the emergency that had arisen. She explained to him her reasons for not wishing to remain with the party, which, in his view, were sufficiently cogent; indeed, her mere will would have been considered imperative, without a single argument. She said to him:—

"We can escape more readily to-night than to-morrow, or any subsequent period."

"Dat am a fack," quoth Balaam.

"Come, my friend," she continued, "how shall it be done?"

"I want to know just where yer gwine when yer git away; dat's de question dat 'quires splainin'."

"Perhaps I shall throw myself upon the protection of Captain Brion."

"De man you"——

"The man I—what, Balaam?" said Mignon, sharply, coloring.

"Nuffin' of no consequence," replied Balaam. "Don't 'sturb me; I'm thinkin' how it can be done."

"I'll wait patiently."

The African remained silent some five minutes.

"We shall want our hosses," he said, at length.

Mignon assented.

"Well, dis chile must crawl out dar 'mong 'em, cut de side-lines, and lead 'em off softly, while you creep away in nuther direction."

"Yes, Balaam."

"Den I jines ye wid de hosses, ober dar by dem cotton-woods."

"Suppose you should be discovered?"

"Dis cullod feller fight—git away. I'll meet you dar, sure, 'twixt dis and mornin'—pervidin' you git dar."

"That I can do, believe me. You see I am small—I can move quietly. Look out, and observe what is going on."

Balaam did as bidden, reporting that most of the party were gathered around the dead body of Grenier, but he could hear voices in Callard's tent.

"The fate of that man was sudden and awful, but I imagined I saw in his death the hand of retributive justice," said Mignon.

"Redpath am about," said the black, in an undertone.

"Yes, it would really seem that there is such a personage; he was spoken of by that very man as a fitting terror to unloose upon Captain Brion's party, but his evil thought has reacted on him; yonder he lies lifeless, translated in a moment from this world to the other, with his sins upon him—with his many unrepented sins weighing darkly upon him."

Mignon paused, arrested possibly by the thought that the same peril attended her whenever she might wander in the mountains.

"Did you remark, Balaam, that the half-breed was much affected by fear? I recognized him immediately, as one of the three men in the service of Mariot—one of the trio from whose rudeness I was saved by the brave mountaineer. Not long since I confounded him with another, but who was a better man undoubtedly."

"Dere, missy, I'se forgot sev'ral 'portant 'tic'lars!" exclaimed Balaam, without heeding Mignon's last remarks. "Here's our tent and baggage; can't get 'long 'thout 'em."

"I know they are useful, but necessity compels us to leave them."

The black looked round and shook his head—equivalent to a declaration that he must have them at any risk. Mignon gave him to understand that she would confide the matter wholly to his discretion, having unshaken faith in his prudence.

"And now," she resumed, "is it not time for me to go?"

Balaam went out and reconnoitered once more, coming back very soon with the report that there was a fair prospect of success, as the attention of the band was still directed to the subject of Grenier's death; while Mariot and Callard were yet talking earnestly, as he learned by listening in the vicinity of the parties.

"I hate to have ye try it," said Balaam, "'cause it's dangerous-like, and dars no knowin' what'll happen; but if ye've made up yer mind to it, why I s'pose ye must. De Lord knows wha'll come ob all dis, for I doesn't; but I'll stick to ye long as I've breff ob life. Now go and manage it de best ye can, and I'll watch ye long as I can see ye."

Mignon left the tent; a single glance over the encampment assured her that the moment was favorable. Moving quickly, her figure was soon lost to Balaam's view in the shadow of the hill, at the base of which lay the valley. Five minutes after, he saw her close to the cotton-woods, and was certain she would reach it without discovery, which she did.

It was then two hours past midnight. The moon was waning, and the stars seemed to look down through a mist of silver. The mountains were grim and cold, the snows on their summits gleaming faintly and weirdly in the pale light.

To Mignon's imagination the view appeared like giant castles, with lofty towers, gloomy bastions, and rugged turrets. The defiles were moats spanned by drawbridges kept by genii. Feelings of awe stole upon Mignon as she cast her eyes toward those mighty barriers. The mightiness of nature, the grandeur of her works, humbled her heart. The ever-famished prairie-dogs barked and fled at her advance, stopping at a little distance to look back and redouble their cries; while occasionally, in the distance, a troop of wolves howled their hideous notes. Though inured to these sounds, Mignon—now that she was alone—if not absolutely terrified, was startled and nervous. There followed her also an unpleasant remembrance of what had occurred that night directly before her, as well as incidents of a similar nature that had happened in Brion's band. As others had asked so did Mignon, "Who is Redpath?"

Her better judgment told her that Redpath was a savage, cunning and deadly, and that

was all. But why were his movements so secret, his step so noiseless, his approach so mysterious? Easy questions to answer. He was secret because success depended upon secrecy; his step noiseless for the reason that he adopted extraordinary precautions; his approaches mysterious as the combined result of long practice and skill. Redpath, then, was but a stealthy Indian, more malevolent than his brethren, hence more terrible. He was daring, persevering and adroit, but perhaps he might find an adversary as daring, persevering and adroit as he. He was but a savage daubed with paint and full of subtlety; he would doubtless fall, ultimately, by the ball of an American woodsman, and his name and fame only survive.

Thus reflected Mignon, trying to suppress those fears which were natural to the time and place, and in which something very like superstition blended. Say what we may to the contrary, the strongest minds have an undercurrent of superstition, and the sturdiest scoffers at the marvelous find a substratum of supernaturalism in their souls. This is a truism that the "atheist's laugh" and the infidel's ridicule cannot overthrow. It is a good thing for man that there is such a susceptibility within him; it is the only avenue through which to convince him of the existence of a Supreme Power, and a conscious life hereafter. Mignon formed no exception to the general body of humanity, in this respect; and though the name of Redpath had at first been presented as a fabled terror, she shared unconsciously, almost, in the prevailing sentiment of the trappers, hunters and voyagers—that Redpath was a being somewhere between human and devilish.

Near the cotton-woods where she was to wait the coming of Balaam, was a crevasse or gully, the entrance to which was more deeply pictured in shadow. Its sides were jagged and high, worn and torn (formerly) by a strong stream of water that tumbled from the lower ranges in a season of rain. At the top, at the very edges of the crevasse, their roots exposed and robbed of soil, stood some trees of pinon, cypress and birch, bending their sickly tops over the chasm. The place, lonely and sombre as it was, appeared to offer to Mignon a safe retreat until the black should join her. With a step that faltered, lacking its wonted firmness, she passed into the gloom of the crevasse. It was cooler there, the night wind breathing through as it crept from the hills. Walking on, she came to a deep dell or basin—a spot of rare obscurity—of which we have had occasion to speak. Beyond were a series of elevations extending to the base of the Wind River chain of the Rocky Mountains.

Mignon paused in that solitude. How complete was her isolation! she seemed alone on the face of the globe, or the only inhabitant of a new world. Hundreds of miles distant were the familiar objects of childhood, scenes indelibly impressed in memory, home with its tender associations. Why had she cast aside the trammels of her sex, and betaken to such a quixotic adventure? To save her father from participation in crime, and to secure, if possible, the safety of Captain Brion, was the never varying response which she gave to those questions. Her father's name always came first, afterward Brion's; that order agreed better with her delicacy. How would the sententious world interpret all this? the world with such a severe sense of decorum—the world that reaches just as far as one's name and fame, and no farther, all beyond being a blank!

"Fear not!" said a voice.

Mignon recoiled and cried out in alarm; beside her stood a tall and motionless figure.

"Be not afraid, pale-face."

The speaker was an Indian of majestic height. With his arms folded upon his breast, he stood looking calmly at Mignon.

"Stand up like a man and do not tremble like a woman. Ravenclaw strikes not such as thou! Thy chin is smooth, thy heart is soft, and there is no power in thy arm to harm my race."

The voice of the red man was deep and musical; it came from his broad chest without effort. His eyes were dark and piercing as those of the eagle; it seemed to Mignon that she became transparent before him, and he had to look at her only, to see what was passing within. His bearing was dignified to a notable degree. He spoke English as if it had been his vernacular tongue.

"The vagabond prairie-dog has a home, the fox a covert, and the wild wolf's whelp a den; but thou, O son of a mighty nation, art shelterless," added the Indian. "Take the goat from the mountains, the buffalo from the prairies, the wild horse from the pampas, the fish from the water, and thee from the dwellings of thy kindred. Each thing and creature loves its element; there-

fore the goat stays on the mountain, the buffalo on the prairie, the wild horse on the pampas, the fish in the water; wherefore art thou here?"

"You say well; you speak according to nature; but it would take long to tell you, son of the eagle, why I am in the country which the Master of Life has given to the redman," replied Mignon, re-assured by the lofty yet kindly manner of the native.

Ravenclaw walked a few paces from Mignon and addressed some one in his own dialect; immediately she heard steps hurrying away. Ravenclaw returned to his former place; but as he did not speak, she followed his example. In a short time—it was long to Mignon—an Indian woman appeared with a bundle.

Ravenclaw pointed to the woman who had appeared before them, and said to Mignon, "Follow her, and do as she bids you." He then spoke to the latter in his own tongue, who, making a gesture to Mignon, proceeded to cross the dell. There Mignon perceived a hut and entered it in obedience to the signs of her guide. The woman lighted a pine torch by some embers that were glowing upon a hearth of stone. Thrusting the end of the torch into the earth, she unrolled the bundle. The maiden's cheeks crimsoned—the bundle contained female wearing apparel of Indian style, which might have belonged to an Indian belle, so elaborately was it made, and so tastefully ornamented with those products esteemed graceful and becoming by tawny dames and red damsels.

The Blackfoot woman pointed to Mignon's clothes, and said, "Take off;" then to the garments she had brought, and added, "Put on."

The eyes of Ravenclaw had penetrated her disguise. Was her artifice so transparent to this son of the mountains? Had Nature indeed gifted him with keener instincts than the child of cities, the pampered creature of civilization? Was she a prisoner? What were his intentions? Such queries ran rapidly through her mind, while mechanically she obeyed the commands of the woman.

A notable change was soon made in Mignon's appearance, and one that was far from displeasing. We cannot picture fully to the reader's imagination the effect of this novel costume (wrought as it was in the height of Indian art), or note the various articles of which it was composed, nor is it needful. We will say, however, *en passant*, that Mignon's small foot did not look less pretty for the substitution of a more elegant moccasin, nor her ankle less dainty for the fringed leggins. Her toilet was not considered complete till her cheeks were stained with paint, and her hands also. The woman then spread some skins upon the ground before the tent, and Ravenclaw, seeing her with Mignon, approached.

"Daughter of the pale-face," he said, "I am of a warlike race, but I do not war upon women. Now tell me why you are here? I will listen—my ears are open."

Mignon understood at once that the wishes of the man in whose presence she stood were commands, and not to be disregarded.

"It were better," she answered, with tact, "that I remain silent before a great chief and a mighty warrior, as thy loftly bearing proclaims thee to be. I have called thee son of the eagle, because the eagle is a noble bird with a daring spirit, proud plumage, and eyes that are not dazzled by the sun. Pass on, thou of the strong wing, nor stoop in thy flight to notice the sparrow that flies not so high, nor emulates thy deeds."

"I say my ears are open; they are, but I hear nothing. Are you speaking, Lilyface?" he said, somewhat haughtily.

"You have called me Lilyface, because the pale blood of my nation betrays itself in my countenance. It is a good name—I like it; I will teach my people to call me thus should I live to return. Listen, chief; the lodge of Lilyface is way on the border, with an hundred prairies and rivers between. She has journeyed many days to reach the hunting-grounds of the Blackfoot. You have asked why she came? Keep your ears open, and you shall hear."

Mignon, in that style pleasing to an Indian's fancy, acquainted him with those particulars which influenced her movements. She spoke of Brion; described the character of Pierre Mariot, finally unfolding his entire plan. Ravenclaw remained calm and unmoved; while Mignon watched his face in vain to note the effect of her story. The incidents of the march were not passed over, but related in their appropriate connection. When she finished, Ravenclaw was in possession of the most important matters contained in the foregoing pages.

"A curse is upon your nation," said Ravenclaw. "That curse is the love of yellow dust; it turns them into greedy wolves; they

howl and tear each other, and are never at rest. They die by the way—their graves lay along the line of march—it is well; the Great Spirit has sent it upon them. They tremble at the name of Redpath, his deeds strike them dumb; they become as women, they grew pale as squaws when the avenger is abroad—when the silent feet of the unknown pursues—when his steps are in the mountains and in the defiles. Lilyface, so perish thy race!"

"And wherefore?" asked Mignon.

"Because they are pushing in over the mountains into the sea. Fish live in the sea, but men cannot. But we have turned on our pursuers like the hunted buffalo, and will go over the snowy ranges fighting and bleeding, and staining the cliffs with blood. Our old men may die, and be buried in sight of the glorious hunting-grounds of the Blackfoot nation; but our young men and our children will fall in arms, or perish ignobly by the sounding shores of the great waters."

Mignon looked earnestly at Ravenclaw, and believed that the prophet-heart was beating in his swelling bosom.

"Home and country are as sacred to the redman as the white. There is but one God, Lilyface, and he is as much the God of the Indian as the white man," added Ravenclaw, in tones that thrilled Mignon.

"You are right!" she exclaimed. "You are my brother; there is but one humanity, one people, one race. The soul of a hero flashes from your eyes—the voice of truth speaks through you—the cause of the Indian is just. Yes, Ravenclaw, you are leaving a fair heritage—it is slipping from you—your way is indeed over the mountains—your children's graves will be the sea."

"And the great and awful Master of Life will avenge us on a proud and rapacious nation!" cried Ravenclaw, with reverential fervor. "He will smite your people—he will sweep them away with the power of his mighty arm. He will remember the wrongs of the redman long after the redman has become extinct, and in his tremendous wrath he will arise and shake heaven and earth; your stars shall fall, and your bloody eagle shall shriek for help."

Ravenclaw stretched out his hand, and his expression was sublime. Mignon was awed, she felt a compassion for the red race that moved her to tears.

"You do well to weep, daugter of a doomed people; even warriors have dropped tears like women, and wiped them from their faces with bloody hands."

Ravenclaw's arms fell to his side, his chin sunk upon his breast, and he stood panting for breath; another pang would have broken his heart.

Mignon did not speak—she dared not interrupt a grief so sublime. She waited for his kingly spirit to grow calm. When he addressed her again, his emotion had subsided, and his tones were subdued to kindness, almost tenderness.

"But I have spoken to you as if you were a warrior, and not a woman. You are not guilty for the sins of your nation; you shall not suffer. Love has made you daring, or your voice would not have been heard in this valley. Wear the garments you have on; they become your sex better, and you are safer in them. Take this, and wear it always in sight; it will keep you from harm when others are ready to perish."

The chief gave Mignon a raven worked in beads upon a piece of dressed otter skin; she fastened it upon her breast.

"I will wear it," she said, "in remembrance of a generous chieftain; it shall be my only talisman."

"Go to the wigwams of my nation," resumed Ravenclaw. "Your frame is too tender to go yonder where the mountain tops are covered with snow. Remain, and in a few moons you shall be conducted safely, and with an escort of warriors, to one of the great forts of your people. This false-hearted Mariot, this craven Frenchman, shall feel the power he has invoked; he shall die as he deserves, and his hireling dogs shall share in his downfall. Though I slay my enemies, I protect the good and the beautiful whom the Master of Life has made to love and not to destroy. You are not such as smite my brethren, your foot is not such as goes on the war-path, nor your voice such as shouts the battle-cry of the pale-face; therefore you live and speak to Ravenclaw. Think not that justice and humanity dwell with the white men only; they have habitations in forests, and in the hearts of men called savages."

"The heart of Lilyface beats with gratitude—the generosity of Ravenclaw fills her with wonder and admiration; yet she loves her people, nor would remain in the lodges of the Blackfoot nation, because her father's spirit would grow heavy with sorrow, and her kindred would mourn her as one dead.

Let Lilyface depart in peace to join the hunters of the mountains."

A cloud rested upon the brow of the Indian, as he replied:—

"I thought to save you from danger, but you refuse to be thus saved. Think again. Would you see the tomahawk and scalping-knife crimsoned with the blood of your people? Would you see them falling like leaves, with no power to aid them?"

"God knows I would see no such horrors!" exclaimed Mignon.

"Remain, and you shall be as safe as if by the fireside of your father's wigwam."

"I doubt it not—I doubt it not!" she replied.

"Yet your heart is near the chief of the white trappers," said Ravenclaw, after a pause. "Be it so; you shall go to him in safety, if it takes all my warriors to conduct you. Yet I swear by the Great Spirit that not a hair of your head shall fall, if you stay."

"You have inspired me with such confidence," returned Mignon, "that your word is to me like that of the Master of Life. If I were weary, and you said to me—'Lie down there and sleep in safety,' I would do so, and rest without troubled dreams."

Mignon smiled sweetly, and held out her hand to Ravenclaw. He took it and held it a moment in his own. He did not utter his thoughts, his lips were closed, his face calm, though the sternness of his expression was gone—but his breathing grew quick, shaking his broad breast with its vehemence. Who shall tell what strong feeling was wrestling with his grand spirit, and how nobly he mastered himself?

"Lilyface," he said, in tones that welled up from his soul, "you make me think better of your race. I will not forget you—I will think of you till I go to the land of spirits where my fathers have gone. Look up and see the stars, and remember, many moons from now, when you stand again near the wigwams of your kindred and behold them shining—that you saw them once in a far-off country, and with the chief of a hunted people beside you. In his dreams, Ravenclaw has heard a voice like thine; but after to-night, it will be heard save in dreams only. Lilyface, daughter of my enemies, we meet because it was the will of the Great Spirit, we part because it is also his will."

Ravenclaw relinquished Mignon's hand, repeating in a voice of deepest melancholy, "We meet—we part!"

"We may meet again in the land of souls," said Mignon.

"The redman and the white will be forever distinct," resumed Ravenclaw.

"In that country to which we are going, all nations will forget their earthly indifferences. Enemies will be reconciled, races will blend, and kindreds and families and peoples mingle happily," returned Mignon.

"Never!" exclaimed the chief. "The soul of a redman and the soul of a white will remain eternally unlike each other; their desires and instincts are not the same."

"The revelations of that mysterious life are hidden from our eyes; we see darkly, and know imperfectly; but the beneficent hand of the Great Spirit will remove the vail, and at death we shall discern more clearly, and think more comprehensively. Chief of a powerful nation, adieu till then!"

"Be it so—it is decreed; and what is decreed cannot be changed. Our paths have been approaching each other since the hour our lives commenced; but having met, after to-night they will forever diverge. Daughter of the pale-face, a voice calls you away; leave my sight—go, go!"

Ravenclaw drew his form to a loftier height, and assumed a sterner expression. Mignon took a ring from her finger, and placing it on his hand, said:—

"It is the gift of Lilyface—keep it."

Ravenclaw held the glittering jewel between his thumb and finger.

"This will be more precious to me than my life," he replied. "I will wear it on my breast where it shall feel the motion of my heart as long as it beats. It shall be with me when I sleep and when I awake; it shall go with me to battle; my hands shall grasp it when I die. In years to come, should the plough of the white man disturb my bones, they will cast up this gift. And now go, go! You shall hear no more the voice of Ravenclaw."

Mignon hastened away; at the distance of a few paces she paused and waved her hand, but Ravenclaw stood immovable, and made no sign.

CHAPTER IX.

BRION'S NUMBERS ARE DIMINISHED.

BRION'S camp was astir very early in the morning. The hunt was to be resumed, and the hunters wished to be season-

ably in the saddle. Headley and his party, excited by their new hopes and schemes, were among the first to wake. They had dreamed of a golden harvest, and the "Casa Montezuma." The partisan had not betaken to his blanket until nearly daylight, and weary with his vigils, he was yet slumbering.

Mariot was not to be seen. The gold-seekers, drawn together by sympathy of feeling, were cooking their breakfast very amicably. Inquiries were made respecting the absence of the grand projector of the new enterprise. Headley only appearing undisturbed by the circumstance, he was naturally looked to for light upon the subject.

"He left us last night," said Headley, in low tone. "He came to me before he went, and instructed me what to do. 'If I don't return,' he said, 'before morning, you need not expect me, but fall back to the Red Buttes with as many as have the courage to follow you, where we will arrange everything to mutual satisfaction.' This was what he told me."

Headley arose with a determined look.

"I am one that goes; who will follow me?"

"Let us go for our horses," said Conroy.

"Agreed, agreed!" cried a dozen voices. "To the Red Buttes—to the Red Buttes!"

Buckeye was passing the malcontents, and heard enough to understand what was going forward; he ran and aroused Brion from sleep.

"Come, cap'n, it is time for you to act; the Headley and Dorelle party are deserting."

Brion was instantly upon his feet and walking towards the horses, which having eaten their fill, were lying down.

"Ain't you going to call out some of the men to help you?" asked Buckeye.

"No, I can help myself," said the partisan, firmly.

He found Headley bridling a horse, and others preparing to do the same.

"Men," said Brion, "these animals belong to the American Fur Company; you cannot take them."

Headley was confused.

"What!" he exclaimed. "Have we not ridden these horses since the hour we left Fort Leavenworth?"

"You have had the light of the moon, but I think you do not own the moon," replied Brion, quietly.

"We have ridden these animals, we have called them ours, we have groomed and cared for them, and we shall take them," rejoined Headley, raising the saddle from the ground.

"Stop!" thundered the partisan; "do not add robbery to unmanly conduct. Everything you see here is in my charge, and I will spend the last drop of my blood in its defence! Go, if you will, in search of the Casa Montezuma, and the fabulous treasures of the Valley of the Gila, but go as you are. You shall not plunder my camp for the benefit of your mad schemes. Had you made known to me the cause of your dissatisfaction, and informed me of your intentions to abandon my party and seek for treasures in a distant region, I would in turn have dealt frankly with you; I would have told you that you are being duped by a villain; but this is past—you are unworthy of my confidence. Go and learn by bitter experience that you should deal honestly with all men, nor disregard solemn compacts. I see here thirteen, who cease from this moment to be members of my band. Leave us at once, and never return—unless as penitent and reasonable men desiring protection."

"Protection!" sneered Headley.

"By the beard of Joe Smith!" cried Buckeye, who had followed Brion, "you'll need it!"

"Then doubtless we shall call upon you!" returned Conroy.

"Shoulder your rifles, my friends," said Headley, to his adherents.

"To the Red Buttes—to the Red Buttes!" shouted others.

"I pity these misguided men; my anger yields to compassion," said the partisan to Buckeye, in a low tone.

"It's sympathy wasted, cap'n; it isn't in 'em to be wise and prudent, especially while that tall Missourian is among 'em. The quicker you get rid of such fellers, the better; for they ain't fit for business, and never will be," answered Buckeye.

"Though indignant at your conduct, I regret to see you rushing blindfolded into new difficulties and dangers. Men, let me warn you to shun Dorelle, and make your way with as much secrecy and expedition as possible to Fort Laramie," resumed Brion, addressing the gold-seekers once more.

"You speak of difficulties and dangers, as though there were none attending your ex-

pedition, and we were not at this moment turning our backs upon them," said Conroy.

"Once more, my friends—shoulder arms—march! If we cannot have horses, we can go on foot, and trust to luck—and Monsieur Dorelle."

The gold-seekers fell into marching order, and moved off in quite a spirited manner.

"Dim-sighted fools!" exclaimed Buckeye. "They are marching to destruction!"

"Or to join the Rocky Mountain Fur Company," added Brion.

"They won't do it, even if the alternative be presented; they've got their minds puffed up with ideas of treasure and sudden wealth, and that's a hard notion to get rid on. They will insist on the original project."

"As long as they think there's any truth in it," said Brion.

"And Mariot won't tell 'em he's lied in a hurry."

"Well, they have provoked their fate, whatever it may be. My party is minus thirteen men; thirteen from seventy-two leaves fifty-nine."

"You've lost thirteen men, but your band isn't weakened; it's strengthened, because the remainder are disciplined, somewhat, have experience, and can be commanded. Men that won't be governed ain't the kind for your purpose, cap'n."

While this scene was transpiring, the main body of the party were quietly eating breakfast around their respective fires.

The sun was rising above the level of the eastern prairies; he came up like a ball of liquid fire. Soft and grateful zephyrs, bearing aromatic odors, breathed around the mountaineer as he walked thoughtfully about the encampment, giving orders. The events of the morning had induced him to change his mind in regard to hunting the buffalo. His camp was in a situation too much exposed to be left in charge of a small party, which would necessarily be the case, should he send out twenty or thirty of his band to hunt. He therefore formed the resolution of moving forward to a canon, a few miles further on. Once in possession of the canon, he could hold his ground against a large body of enemies with half his company; but he was suspicious that it was occupied by savages, who were waiting a favorable opportunity to attack them, either while they were hunting or scattered on the march, and unprepared for resistance. This suspicion was produced by what he had heard when listening to the conversation of Mariot and Beavertaker, and the suggestions previously made by the former in regard to his route, he having advised him to keep near the mountains.

Accompained by Buckeye, Brion mounted and rode toward the canon. It was a fixed principle with the latter always to take the post of danger, and be the foremost in situations requiring courage and skill. When approaching a place where an enemy was known to be concealed, he asked no one to solve the matter, but settled the question by his personal bravery and tact. If the front were threatened, he was in the front; if the rear, he was in the rear, taking at once the responsibility and the risk.

"Get up, Flash!" said Buckeye, giving his horse the rein.

While the parties were galloping toward the canon, the clatter of hoofs arrested their attention. The sounds came from beyond a small strip of timber forty or fifty rods ahead, and presently two persons turned the wood and drew in sight.

"Ingins!" exclaimed Buckeye.

"No," replied Brion, "one is a negro."

"And the other is an Ingin woman or gal, or somethin' of that natur."

"It would seem so," said the partisan, observing the advancing persons sharply. "At all events, their intentions are not hostile," he added.

"By the beard of Smith!" cried Buckeye, "that nigger feller is ridin' the same hoss that that youngster rode who fell in with us t'other day."

"The resemblance is striking, I confess," returned Brion.

"There's no resemblance about it; it's the same," rejoined the partisan.

The object of these remarks approached.

"Are you lookin', cap'n?" asked Buckeye, in a low voice.

"I am," said Brion.

"Isn't she oncommon? What a face! what a figure! what an eye!"

"Handsome, certainly," returned the partisan.

"Bewitchin', cap'n!" added Buckeye, with increasing enthusiasm.

"Beware that you do not fall in love with the Indian beauty," said Brion, playfully.

"I sha'n't make no promises, 'cause love will go where it's sent. Flash, you rascal, pick up your ears and cut a caper!"

Flash, in obedience to his master's man-

date, and quickened perchance by the spur, reared and caricoled coltishly.

"Now's yer time, cap'n," continued the trapper, "to make an impression. Put on the iron and show off; these Ingin gals are 'mazin' fond of horsemanship."

"Beavers and otters!" exclaimed Buckeye; "the gal don't ride like one of the heathen riptiles. She sets on sideways jes' like a convarted Christian female. Beard of the prophet Smith! but isn't it singular?"

"She sits gracefully, I'm sure," said Brion.

"As a queen!" quoth Buckeye.

If the appearance of the Indian maiden produced such a marked effect upon Buckeye, what must have been the emotions of Brion, who believed that in her he recognized the face and form of Mignon? The wonderful disclosures of the previous night had prepared the way to such a recognition. Having seen the features of Balaam, he was not one to forget them; and he was well assured by the few words he heard him utter on that occasion, that he would never be found far from his young mistress. The bosom of the mountaineer was agitated by doubt, love, fear, admiration. Mignon approached, while Balaam checked his horse and fell in the rear. When near enough, she raised her eyes and asked:—

"Is not this Captain Brion, the partisan of the American Fur Company?"

"Yes," said Brion, respectfully.

"I have that to say which must be my excuse for appearing before you in this garb, and under circumstances so peculiar," she added, averting her eyes, her cheeks becoming suddenly suffused.

Brion's heart beat rapidly. The modesty and heroism of Mignon charmed him. He thought of what she had done, and the dangers she had dared. And for what had she tempted such perils? The query came with stunning force. What but love makes woman bold?

"You need no excuse for appearing before Ben Brion," he replied, with warmth. "Your wishes shall be my commands; you have only to name them. I beg of you to be frank, and trust me as if we had met and established an acquaintance."

Mignon looked inquiringly at the partisan to learn if the words had other significance than what they seemed to have upon their surface.

"My communications will consist of vague warnings which I fear will appear indefinite and unsatisfactory," Mignon resumed.

"Such apprehensions do injustice to my nature," said Brion.

"So I shall endeavor to persuade myself," continued Mignon, with captivating ingenuousness. "I love to think well of humanity; I have pleasure in seeing poor human nature exalted. I will—to employ a Jewish simile—deal frankly and truly with thee, though it may cost me pain and confusion. You wonder why I am here; it is to warn you of the danger of which I have spoken—this is why I am before you."

"For me!" exclaimed Brion, astounded at such a declaration.

"Hear me; the danger which threatened you compromised the honor of one who is dear to me," rejoined Mignon.

If the declaration she had first made filled him with hope, the last avowal dispelled it. One who was "dear to her!" Ah, that must be a lover or a husband!

"You are the victim of a wicked scheme, which has for its object the destruction of your party. The man to whom belongs the paternity of the plot, will not fail through softness of heart or scruples of conscience."

"May I ask his name?"

"I cannot tell you; it would involve another. If I can defeat him without exposing him, I will."

"He is Pierre Mariot," said Brion.

Mignon grew pale.

"It is too true," she answered. "You have discovered the secret."

"I even know you," resumed the mountaineer.

Mignon looked up in alarm.

"Will you speak my name?" she said.

"Mademoiselle Bellmar; those to whom friendship gives the right to address you familiarly, call you Mignon."

Mignon's face became crimson. A lovelier countenance could not have been presented to the gaze of the mountaineer. His sympathies, his love, his soul itself, seemed to pass over to Mignon. He idealized her perfections, he spiritualized her beauty. The conquest which began at Westport was now complete. Mignon became all that was divine in woman. Brion wished to kneel at her feet and do homage.

"You are right," she responded, pensively.

"And do you remember that we once met?"

"Well, it was at night; you laid me under obligations which I shall not forget."

"And did you imagine that I could forget, Mademoiselle Bellmar? Pardon my boldness, but your idea has been with me ever since. I have thought of you on the march; I have dreamed of you while sleeping on the prairies. And you are here before me! Oh, this cannot be reality—this is the veriest hallucination!"

At first, Brion fixed his eyes on the maiden's face; but startled at his own temerity, he allowed them to sink till they rested upon Mignon's little foot. Mademoiselle felt the blood glowing in her cheeks, and dancing through her swelling veins preternaturally quick.

"There will be time for gallant speeches when we meet under different circumstances," she resumed, with dignity, casting off her womanly weakness.

"I crave pardon, but I never speak what I do not mean."

"And what is it that you mean?" she asked, with asperity.

"Since you are offended, I dare not confess. It is more becoming to thank you for the undeserved exertions you have made in my behalf. Mademoiselle, I know not how to clothe my feelings of gratitude in words."

"I will spare you the trouble," said Mignon, with a smile, extending her hand to him.

"I swear by this hand to be the most devoted of your friends—to sacrifice life, everything, to secure your safety."

"That is much, and unasked, too; for I did not come like love-lorn damsel seeking adventurous knight."

Mignon pronounced these words with a smile on her lips, but in a tone somewhat indicative of injured pride, which the partisan did not fail to notice.

"I cherish no thoughts or feelings not to your favor," he said, quickly. "I entertain for you the profoundest respect. Never, I trust, will you have reason to blush for word or act of mine, or regret the step you have taken to ward off pressing danger. Chance has already made me acquainted with the nature of the peril that impends. Mariot is indeed a villain, and it is truly unfortunate that a man like Monsieur Bellmar, your father, of whose name I have heard honorable mention, should be connected with him in business."

"No one can regret it more deeply than I; it has long been a source of pain."

"I am willing to absolve Monsieur Bellmar from all participation in this scheme for the destruction of my band, and the injury of my employers."

"You do him no more than justice; he is anxious that the designs of Mariot should come to nought."

"He is acquainted with those designs, it would seem."

Mignon was embarrassed; she withheld a portion of the truth to screen him from the imputation of guilt.

"I chanced to hear," she said, "a conversation not intended for my ears, which made me a party to his purposes. Being in possession of his secret, it is natural I should disclose it to my father."

"Very true," said Brion, "and for his sake I doubt not you have accomplished this perilous pilgrimage."

"Yes, it is true; you construe me truly and generously. I would do much, rather than have my father's name linked with infamy."

"That expression does you much honor, and raises you still higher in my esteem. Having done all you can do, it is probable that you wish to return. Is it so?"

"I put myself under your protection until I shall be so fortunate as to meet a party returning from the mountains; then I shall go back."

"To afford you every assistance in my power will be but a meagre testimonial of my gratitude. I now have duties to perform requiring my immediate attention; but I will first conduct you to camp."

"Is it far, captain?"

"You see yonder hill? It is at the right of that."

"Then I need not trouble you to go back; Balaam will easily find it."

Brion demurred at this agreement; but Mignon was firm, insisting that the way was short, and their acquaintance should not commence with taking him from his duties.

"Besides," she added, looking kindly at the black, "Balaam is as good as a regiment." Balaam was flattered; shaking his brawny arm, he declared himself a "host" in the defence of his mistress.

"There's a cretur among us," quoth Buckeye, "that none of us can guard against."

"Redpath?" said Mignon.

"That's the nat'ral varmint I mean," returned Buckeye.

"I do not fear Redpath, even; I wear a charm," Mignon rejoined.

"You wear a good many charms, miss, that are jes' calkilated to turn a feller's head e'enamost," Buckeye replied, casting a furtive glance at the partisan.

"I refer to a special charm," resumed Mignon, blushing, "which will guard me in the hour of danger."

"For me there's no charm like your beauty, miss, and to protect that, I'd stan' afore an army of savage reptiles like Redpath."

"Oh, you are sincere, I'm sure! So I thank you, and will proceed."

"Remember directions—bear well to the right. If no accident occurs, I will be with you soon." Then to Balaam: "Tell my men that you met their leader, and he expects them to treat this young lady with respect."

"Yes, massa, I'll spoke dat to 'em," said Balaam.

"I was correct," affirmed Buckeye, when Mignon was out of hearing, "about the black hoss."

"I think you were, really," Brion replied.

"One thing I should like to know," added the trapper.

"Well?"

"The youngster's name that used to ride the cretur which now carries that dusky heathen."

"Crevier. Confess that you did not like him?"

"He appeared foppish; but atween you and I, I mistrusted that it was a woman the minute I put my eyes on him."

"I cannot give you credit for so much perspicacity. Had you been suspicious of her sex, your bearing would have been less repulsive. Your gallantry I cannot doubt, since you passed your compliments upon yonder young lady so adroitly. If you go on in that way, by my faith, Buckeye, you will prove a dangerous rival!"

The trapper drew up his shoulders significantly.

"I didn't mean that you should git ahead of me, cap'n, though you're very ficoent in speech; but by the beard of Smith! you made a plump declaration."

"I hope I was not guilty of such folly," said Brion, biting his lips.

"That oncommon cretur would make any man commit indiscretions, cap'n. Them eyes of hern'll shine afore me for the next twenty-four hours like di'mon's. And perhaps you didn't notice the little foot no longer than a doll's?"

"Perhaps not," said the mountaineer, dryly.

"Her hands are like fairies' hands," persisted Buckeye.

"You are observing, my friend."

"And her smile is of a heavenly natur," said Buckeye, perseverjngly.

"Be quiet; look yonder just where those bushes skirt the plateau, and tell me if you see aught that is suspicious!"

"I see a motionless object, that seems from this distance like a stick or a stone."

"Watch it a moment."

"It moves a little; it's a riptile—one of the onregenerate productions of this great kentry!"

"Let us move that way; perchance we may stir up a nest of them. I have known one to stand like a fixture, while several of his companions were concealed in the surrounding thickets. It may be thus in the present instance."

Bending somewhat to the left, that their advance might be covered by an arm of timber reaching out into the prairie, the wary trappers approached the suspicious object, which, after all, might prove a wolf or a buffalo; for the space intervening was yet considerable. Keeping a careful watch in every direction where they supposed it possible an enemy could be concealed, they soon turned the timber; but that which had drawn their scrutiny was no longer in sight. It had vanished in the wood, sank into the earth, or was hidden in the grass.

"We were seen, you perceive," said Brion. "Our design was fathomed before we changed our course. But what is this upon this tree? A human figure carved in the bark!"

The mountaineer rode to the tree and examined the carving, which was yet fresh.

"Not ten minutes have elapsed since the edge of the knife left these lines," said Brion.

"Not five," said Buckeye. "The sap yet flows from the wounds. Now this wasn't made for nothin'; there's meanin' to it, as there is about everythin' an Ingin does."

"Possibly it was cut for amusement."

"No, sir; depend on't, there's some deviltry in it."

"The handiwork of Redpath," answered Brion, with a smile and an incredulous look.

"It wouldn't be strange, though I don't think the cretur finds time for much fancy-work of this partic'lar description."

"It strikes me, Buckeye, that you really fear this incomprehensible Redpath!"

"Fear is a word I don't very much like, cap'n, even from you. I'll thank you to find the man who'll call me a coward to my face. As for Redpath, he's like nobody else—a sort of Ingin devil that baffles the wisest of us; but I'm not afraid of him—no, not by no means; and in fact I should like to meet him face to face, as one brave man meets another. I would put a good American rifle ball through his body; I would kill him as I would a wolf, and his accursed art and mystery would perish with him."

The mountaineers were bending over their horses' necks looking at the figure; the air was slightly disturbed, and something passed between them and struck the object at which they were looking with a sharp concussion. Both instinctively drew back—a long arrow was quivering in the tree. For a moment Brion was too much astonished to speak or to act.

"By the beard of Smith!" said Buckeye.

The sound of his voice aroused the partisan; putting spurs to his horse he dashed toward the timber.

"By heavens!" he muttered. "I will make an attempt to solve this mystery."

He urged his horse into the wood, which being free from underbrush, offered but little impediment; he galloped through and around it, and came back with his animal heated and foaming.

"Why do you sit motionless? Why not make an effort to find this invisible archer?" asked the trapper.

"A sense of gratitude fastens me here, cap'n."

"A sense of gratitude? I do not understand.".

"It is jes' here; consider, and you'll perceive that the arm that sent that shaft directly to the head of that figure, could have sent it through your head or mine."

"That is a very just conclusion, Buckeye. I did not pause to think of nice points; but indeed I could scarcely find it in my heart to draw a hair sight on one who, having my life in his power, did not take it. In this you have acted wisely. Yes, the eye that aimed that ball could have aimed it at a human brain instead of an insentient one like that. What a narrow boundary lies between us and death?"

"Scarcely wider than the edge of my huntin' knife."

"Ah, Buckeye, we must travel that trail sometime!"

"A strange road—a strange road! And it's been used a good deal, too."

"Death is at times a cold and awful mystery to me, but not always. What is it to you?"

"I expect my mind is a dark and ignorant one, but it too often seems to me an eternal sleep. Perchance, I shall go back to elemental dust, and be as I was years ago—a little matter in motion only changin' form."

"That is not the most cheerful imaginable, but far better than a future of pain."

While Brion was conversing, his hands were not idle; he was cutting the arrow from the tree with his hatchet, which, when extracted, he examined with intense curiosity. The sharp, polished, tapering steel head, delicately small,—the long smooth shaft attached, had for him a peculiar interest, connected as they were with the fate of Townsend and Minten, Stringer and Grenier.

"It is wondrously well wrought," he remarked.

"And marvelously well sped, too," added Buckeye.

"I will keep it as a memento of Redpath."

"Also to make you think, perhaps, that the mate to it is kept for you, and you will sometime receive it."

The canon was now near at hand, and as they drew in sight of it, the partisan saw a human form standing upon the summit of a high cliff, which he quickly pointed out to the trapper. The sun was shining upon the jagged elevation gloriously, making the figure appear as if clothed in flame. He gazed down upon them a moment, waved his hand and disappeared.

Brion looked inquiringly at his companion.

"It may be the evil one himself; he shone like a pillar of fire," suggested Buckeye.

"His majesty has a majestic figure, then."

"He can assume any shape, undoubtedly."

The mountaineers entered the canon and passed through it; it sheltered no visible enemy, and they turned their horses' heads toward the encampment of the previous night, Brion entirely absorbed in thought.

"Do you know," said Buckeye, interrupt-

ing his reverie, "that Redpath is not the only one among us that's dangerous? There's one who aims not at the head but at the heart, and her arrows go straight as a rifle ball."

Brion writhed under the captain's raillery, but deemed it wisest to keep silent.

"And yet this fair archer, though she doesn't aim at the head, affects the brain not a little with her pretty arrows, which are launched from her sparklin' eyes."

The mountaineer confessed, internally, that there was truth in this metaphor, inasmuch as the insidiously wounding weapons of Mignon were vibrating beneath his hunting-frock, at the very centre of a great and active muscle indispensable to life.

[To be continued.]

JUNE ROSES—"MAIDEN'S BLUSH."

BY MARY C. BILLINGS.

THE fairest rose that the garden knows
Is born in the warmth of June;
With tender glow and a heart of snow,
In morning's flush, or at evening's hush,
While the song-birds are in tune;
'Tis the "Maiden's Blush,"
The sweet pink rose—
The loveliest flower that blows.

Our maiden fair, of the sunny hair,
Is queenlier than the rose;
With tenderer flush, and a softer blush;
Lovely and rare—aye, beyond compare
Is our own sweet maiden Rose—
Is this choicer rose
Than others are—
That bloom in love's genial air.

O marriage hour, of our precious flower!
Ring joyfully, bells of June!
Raise holy prayer, that the Father's care
Be o'er her home in the days to come,
Life's music to keep in tune;
That love's richest sum
As bridal dower
Be hers from this happy hour.

THE MYSTERY OF NOIRMONT CASTLE.

BY GIACOMO CAMPANA.

NORTHWEST of the lake of Geneva, between the French department of Jura and the Swiss frontiers, lies a strip of mountain country, which was for a long time claimed both by France and Switzerland, but actually held by neither. It was "in chancery," internationally speaking, and was suffered to pick up what little government it had pretty much by accident. This paucity of government did not appear to be regarded in the light of a very serious misfortune by the inhabitants. To be sure, the right to pay taxes, to perform military duty, and sundry other governmental privileges of that sort, were denied them. But even this, the hard-headed mountaineers were evidently but little disposed to regret.

The vale of Noirmont is sparsely inhabited, and the land generally of an indifferent quality. There are, however, a considerable number of vineyards of good repute, and a few south-side slopes which produce vintages of world-wide celebrity. One of these, which had been especially famous in the olden time, now lies an uncultivated waste. An avalanche, or rather a land-slide, from the mountain which towers above it, ruined the largest as well as the finest vineyard in the valley—that attached to the Castle of Noirmont.

Like many other ruined edifices, Noirmont had the reputation of being inhabited, or at least visited, by beings of unearthly mould; and the wonders told of it were not mere ordinary, common-place ghost stories. Really strange things had happened at the ruined Castle of Noirmont, for the truth of which there were better vouchers than are

usually furnished in corroboration of the vagaries of old peasant-women's gossip.

The early grapes were just beginning to ripen when I first entered the romantic vale of Noirmont. The hills were blushing with the rich purple clusters, while bare rocky crags towered above them thousands of feet, in all their wild sublimity and savage grandeur. I was just winding up one of my summer rambles—working my way back to Paris again, from among the mountain marvels of Switzerland. I was greatly pleased with the appearance of the country, and I soon formed a resolution to remain in the Vale de Noirmont till the end of the approaching vintage. It was always my custom, while in France, to choose some such spot as this at the commencement of the vintage, and there run riot among the grapes, like a fruit-enamored school-boy.

I took up my lodging at the inn of the "*Deux Freres Gris*," which you may translate the "Two Gray Friars," or the "Two Tipsy Friars," just as you please. The word "Gris" has two meanings. Which was the correct rendering I never could make out; for both the monks on the sign were gray, and both, too, were undeniably tipsy. I am rather inclined to think that the artist meant to paint a double entendre.

This little hostelry was one of the dozen or two of houses constituting the village of Clairault. My determination to spend some time in the place was formed very soon after my first interview with the landlady, Mere Le Brun—or Mother Brown.

Mere Le Brun was fat, fair, and forty-seven, though she might well have passed for forty. She was an excellent cook, and, as far as her means went, kept an excellent table, and her beds were unusually clean and comfortable. She was also a sensible woman, and had some education. But there was another thing that had even more to do with my protracted stay here than Mere Le Brun. It was the old Castle of Noirmont, which I have already mentioned.

The first evening after my arrival, I was taking a cup of tea, in a cosey tete-a-tete with the landlady, when the following conversation took place:—

"Does monsieur like his tea?"

"It is very good, madame, very good indeed. Another cup, if you please. This mountain air, it seems to me, gives one an excellent appetite."

"Monsieur will certainly find it so."

"What turrets are those I see from the window above stairs? Off there, towards the north, I think it is."

"That is the castle—the old Castle of Noirmont; a thousand years old, they say."

"Does anybody live in it?"

"Oh, no, sir; it has been in ruins this many a long year. No one has ever lived there since I can recollect."

"Well, judging from your looks, I should not think that was a very great while."

"Monsieur is complimentary. But I can remember very nearly forty years back, and in all that time it has been just as it is now. I don't think it has been inhabited for more than a hundred years."

"Indeed! The old place must be worth looking at. I'll go and see it to-morrow."

"Go and see the castle! Holy Mary, what an idea! You must not think of it, monsieur."

"And why not, pray?"

"Why, bless your soul and body, sir, nobody ever goes there."

"But why?"

"Oh, it's the awfulest, terriblest place that ever was! You couldn't get anybody to go within a hundred yards of it even in the day time."

"But madame has not told me why."

"Why, lor', sir, it's haunted—haunted the very worst you ever heard of."

"What is it haunted with?"

"That is what nobody knows, unless it is Jules Frontin or Pierre Maubert. No one can tell what horrible things are done there; and that's the very thing that makes it so dreadful. It's such a great mystery!"

"But who are Jules Frontin and Pierre Maubert?"

"Well, Jules is a wild, harum-scarum, young dare-devil, the notary's son. Pierre Maubert is an old soldier—a corporal of the *Garde Imperiale*. Anybody would say that they are the two hardest men to scare in all the Vale de Noirmont; yet that castle did frighten them both, so to change their very natures."

"How was that?"

"Well, you see, strange things had been seen and heard about the castle for ever so long—and are yet, for that matter. Lights were seen, dancing about, at all hours of the night; strange, unearthly sounds were heard, seeming to come from the very bowels of the earth; strange figures were observed, flitting about the place; and all these things

had made the old castle the talk of the country for many years. People were full of curiosity to know more about it; but nobody had the courage to go near enough to learn anything certain.

"Last summer, Jules Frontin came home from Paris, where he had been staying three or four years, in a notary's office. He was the boldest and most reckless lad in all the valley, before he left home; and his Parisian experience did not tend to tame him any, you may be very sure. He swore that all the ghosts that had haunted the old tumble-down rat-trap since the days of Nebuchadnezzar could not make him flinch one hair's breadth; and he declared that he would go and spend the night there; and he was very certain that if there was anything, in the flesh or out of it, that would have the boldness to meet him there, he would have the hardihood to find out what it was, before morning.

"In spite of all his friends could urge against it, Jules persevered in his design. It was one night last July that he started for the castle. Scores of the villagers went with him to the top of the hill you see this side of it, and there took leave of him, confidently believing that they would never see him alive again.

"The next morning the whole village was in a hubbub, long before day; and there must have been at least a hundred persons assembled on the hill by the time the sun rose. Soon afterwards Jules made his appearance; but it was a very different appearance from that which he had made the night before. His dare-devil recklessness was all gone; he was as mild as milk and as sober as a rejected suitor, and to the eager inquiries of the people he answered never a word; nor has anybody ever gotten a word out of him, on the subject, from that day to this. So the mystery of Noirmont castle, instead of being explained, became more of a mystery than it had ever been."

"Does Jules Frontin live here still?"

"No, sir. He left the place very soon after his adventure at the castle, and has never returned. But Jules was not the only one who tried to get at the bottom of this castle mystery. Old Pierre Maubert was not here at that time. He came home about a week after Frontin's attempt, and when he heard of it, he swore *mille millions de tonnerres* that Jules was nothing but a raw conscript, totally unfit to cope with Satan and his imps. He would spend a night in the castle himself, and if he didn't tell them all about the ghosts and hobgoblins, and all their doings the next morning, then the most miserable *Pekin* in the valley might call old Pierre Maubert a coward.

"The old corporal was as good as his word. Last year, in the early part of the vintage—just about this season—he went to the castle, taking with him a mattress, arms of all kinds, and eatables and drinkables in abundance. He was full of confidence, and swore most positively that there should be no castle mystery, from that night, for evermore.

"As in Jules's case, a great many went out to the hill with him, and scores met him there, or rather went out there to meet him, before sunrise. They waited there an hour or two, but no Pierre made his appearance. People shook their heads and imagined terrible things.

"At last it began to be whispered about that Pierre had been seen in his own house, in the village. In a short time most of the crowd adjourned thither. The first person who asked him any questions was an urchin thirteen years old. Pierre's only answer, and one which greatly surprised the questioner, was a sound box on the ear. Others fared little better, and not an individual returned any wiser than he went; so that the old soldier, with all his boasting, threw no more light upon the subject than Frontin had done. Like the latter, he has continued to be silent as the grave from that day to this. Why, no mortal can tell."

"Is he here now?"

"Yes; but I'll give you my word you'll find it no use to ask him anything about the night he spent at the castle. He not only refuses to tell, but it makes him angry to ask him."

"Well, well, he won't hurt me, I suppose; and anger without overt acts is a very harmless affair; even the anger of an ex-corporal of the Imperial Guard."

With this my confab with the landlady ended. The first thing I did the next morning was to call upon the doughty corporal. He did not waste any wrath upon me, but I found he would rather talk of anything else than Noirmont Castle; and when he knew my business, he greatly preferred not to talk at all. My visit, therefore, was not long, or satisfactory. I next went to see the elder Monsieur Frontin, and had a long conversa-

tion with him. He said he was not a superstitious man by any means. He never had been a believer in ghosts—never, in all his life. But he was nevertheless compelled to say that he did believe that his son Jules had seen something supernatural at Noirmont Castle.

The more this castle mystery was examined, the deeper it seemed to become. My age and temperament were just such as to make a problem like this exceedingly attractive to me, and I soon came to the resolution that I would solve it, at all hazards, if a solution were in the bounds of possibility.

Finding it impossible to get any one to accompany me to the castle, even in the day time, I set out to explore it alone. I did explore it pretty thoroughly, and I was disappointed. I found it an old, ruined, ivy-crowned castle, like a dozen others I had visited, and nothing more. Nothing strange about it; nothing romantic, nothing mysterious, nothing fearful, that I could see.

Having gone thus far, however, I was resolved to see the end of the affair. When it became known that I had actually been inside of the terrible castle, and especially when it was discovered that I was resolved to tread in the footsteps of Frontin and Maubert, and spend a night there, I became at once the hero of Clairault.

Mingled with the admiration of which I was the object, was no small amount of pity. Two individuals had barely escaped with their lives from the terrible, nameless beings by whom the mysterious castle was inhabited, and the third, all agreed, was sure to fall a victim to his impious audacity.

The fourth night after my arrival in the valley was the one fixed upon for this famous exploit. There was a moon, though slightly obscured by clouds, and the weather was warm and pleasant. I think there must have been at least five hundred peasants, men, women and children, in my train, as I ascended the hill between the village and the castle; and number of the *pater nostres* and *ave marias* offered up in my behalf were almost innumerable.

At the top of the hill I bade my escort a solemn farewell. Just as I turned to leave them, some one came up behind me, and from a suddenly inverted pitcher, drenched me with water from head to foot. I thought this an exceedingly ill-timed and inexcusable practical joke, and I was about to express that opinion very energetically, when I was made to understand that it was a sort of baptism against evil spirits, and the very highest proof of friendship that could have been given me by the worthy sacristan of the village church, who had expended upon my heretical person not much less than half a gallon of holy water.

By eleven o'clock I was installed in the most habitable apartment of the castle, with a candle, a volume of Balzac, a roast chicken and trimmings, and a bottle of choice old wine, manufactured within half a mile of the spot where I drank it. My curiosity was considerably excited—my fears, not at all, or in a very trifling degree. I expected to have some kind of a spurious ghost to encounter, but I flattered myself that I should be able to give a better account of it than either the ex-corporal or the notary's son had done.

About half past eleven I ate a hearty supper and made a serious inroad upon the integrity of the wine-bottle. I then wrapped my cloak up into a ball, put it under my head, and reclined at ease upon a quantity of soft grass which I had collected in the court-yard.

I had firmly resolved not to allow myself to drop asleep, on any account; but this resolution shared the fate of many another since—it was very soon broken. I fought manfully against the approach of drowsiness, and kept up the struggle for an hour, perhaps. I nodded, straightened myself up again, nodded again, straightened up again, nodded, renodded, straightened up again, feebly raised my head and shook it from side to side, in impotent despair, dropped it, raised it half way up, dropped it again, and then snored outright, a helpless prisoner to all-conquering Morpheus.

I must have slept some hours; how many I do not know, when I began, slowly and with difficulty, to awake again. I had been dreaming, and I thought for some time that my dream still continued. I felt conscious of being annoyed and under constraint, and yet I had no power to make the least movement to relieve myself.

Gradually, however, I became wide awake, and fully conscious of my position. I was in total darkness. Not a ray of light entered the inky atmosphere by which I was surrounded. Not only the candle-light, but the moon-light also, had wholly disappeared, and left me in such perfect obscurity that I could not have seen my hand if it had been placed directly before my eyes.

Bringing my hand before my eyes was in fact the very experiment I thought of making, but when I attempted to move it for that purpose, I found that I could not budge it a single inch, not a single hair's breadth, I might almost say. And that was not the worst of it; my other hand, both feet, my head, every limb and ligament in my body, was in precisely the same condition. I was forcibly reminded of Gulliver, when the Lilliputains bound him to the earth.

Nor was that even the worst of it. I was not only bound, hand and foot, in a state of absolute immobility, and in Egyptian darkness, but there was added to all this the singular annoyance of drops of water, falling constantly, at regular intervals, upon my upturned forehead, as I lay motionless on my back.

At first, this singular treatment was not even disagreeable. The icy coldness of the water was, in fact, rather refreshing to my heated visage. But after it had lasted some ten or fifteen minutes, I began to regard it in a very different light, and in the end it became positive torture to me.

I now began to remember that I had heard of persons being put to death, or driven to madness by this very means. I shuddered convulsively as the idea flashed across my mind, and the slow, steady drop, drop, drop, sounded in my ear like my own funeral knell.

No one who has not experienced it can form any idea of the extraordinary anguish which this simple contrivance can produce. My mind at length began to wander. Nameless horrors came thronging into my brain, and gibbering fiends seemed threatening me with madness. At that moment, a hollow voice, the direction of which I could not make out, pronounced, in a solemn tone, the following words:—

"Presumptuous intruder! Swear, on the Holy Evangel of Almighty God, under the penalties which we shall dictate, that thou wilt never reveal what thou hast here seen and suffered, and thou mayest depart in peace. Refuse, and a miserable death by lingering torture awaits thee. Wilt thou swear?"

"No!" thundered I, with all the emphasis my lungs could produce. I am naturally of an obstinate turn.

But, besides my own innate pig-headedness, there was another reason influencing me. It all at once recurred to me that the old corporal and the notary's son had been put to a similar test, and been forced to take the prescribed oath. Hence their obstinate silence on the subject. Rather than be compelled to go away with my finger in my mouth, as they did, I was resolved to let them drop away, and drop my head off, if such a thing were possible. Bracing my muscles and nerves to the contest, I prepared to "grin and bear it," and so I did for ten or fifteen minutes longer, when despairing, apparently, of the success of this new hydropathic treatment, the dropping was suddenly stopped.

As soon as this cessation of hostilities gave me the ability to use my tongue, I commenced an oration, rather more remarkable for energy than elegance. The art of vituperation in an unfamiliar language is no unfamiliar one to practise, and I would have given much for the privilege of "letting off the steam" in plain, blunt, mother-tongue Saxon; but, as it was, I managed, even with French shackles on my speech, to give my tormentors "a piece of my mind," as female objurgators are wont to say, and I felt considerably relieved, too, by the operation.

After a few minutes of profound quietude and perfect rest, I began to feel the faintest possible sensation of tickling in my right ear. By slow degrees, the tickling increased, until the annoyance it produced became torture of the most terrible kind, and every power of my body, every faculty of my mind, my whole existence, in fact, was merged in an intense longing to raise my finger to my ear and scratch it. For that inestimable privilege, I could have given a world if I had possessed it. But there was one thing I could not, or at least would not give; I would not give up. That same pig-headed obstinacy of soul forbade it.

With a skill that showed them to be masters of their art, my tormentors modified and varied their attacks. They tried my neck, the tip of my nose, my chin, almost every exposed point, indeed, tickling like experts, in a most masterly manner. But it availed them not. I would not surrender—no, not even for the inestimable privilege of scratching.

These two modes of torture were by no means the only ones I suffered, but I will not dwell upon particulars any further. They were all skillfully applied, all had the same end in view, and were equally unsuc-

cessful. In some moods of mind, I could not have held out against the tenth part of such an infliction. But at that juncture, my obstinacy and pride were so thoroughly aroused, that I verily believe they might have torn me in pieces by inches before I would have yielded.

At last, finding all their efforts to get a promise of secrecy from me of no avail, they gave over, and left me in peace for a considerable length of time. I had no doubt they were deliberating as to what final disposition they should make of such a hard-headed customer, and my reflections, in the meantime, you may well believe, were very far from being of a pleasant nature.

That I was at the headquarters of some desperate gang of robbers, and perhaps murderers, I could not doubt. To preserve the secret of their stronghold inviolate was, of course, an object of the greatest possible importance to them, and if they could not secure my silence in any other way, they would hardly scruple to commit a murder for the purpose. Impressed as I was with this view of the case, the intolerable suspense of that period of rest was almost as hard to bear as any of the preceding tortures.

Finally, I began to feel that there was a movement of some sort going on around me. I had hardly had time to become conscious of this, when I suddenly felt that my body was cut away, and that my limbs were free again. In a second I was standing erect, and prepared to give leg-bail to my persecutors, but before I could move three steps in advance, there came an instantaneous flash of light which illuminated everything around, but left me, for the moment, in total blindness.

As soon as my eyes regained their ordinary power, I saw that I was imprisoned by a compact *chevaux-de-frise* of sword-points, bristling on every side of me, and flashing brilliantly in the lamplight. The individuals who held these swords were enveloped in long, black mantles, and had their faces concealed by black masks. They formed a complete circle round me, at the distance only of a few feet, where they stood as immovable as black marble statues.

While I was gazing about me, like a hare in the midst of the hounds, a tall figure stepped forth in advance of the others, and thus addressed me:—

"Every man of those you see around you feels that your eternal silence is as necessary to his existence as the vital air he breathes. It is your folly which has placed you in your present position; it is still greater folly which has induced you, in spite of all our efforts, to refuse what we require of you; and it will be the greatest folly of all, if you continue to persist in your insane obstinacy. For the last time, I ask you, will you take the oath we prescribe?"

"For the last time, I answer, no! no! no!"

"So be it, then. According to our laws, your life is already forfeited. But we can admire bravery, even when it thwarts our purposes, and we have resolved to give you one last chance for your life. Here are two pistols precisely alike, one of which I shall proceed to load in your presence, giving you leave to convince yourself that the other is empty. I will then hold them both behind my back for a minute, and after that you shall take your choice of the two. If you select the loaded one, you shall be securely imprisoned as long as we think it necessary for our safety. If you should be unfortunate enough to choose the empty one you will thereby sign your own death-warrant—and may God have mercy on your soul!"

I saw one of the pistols loaded, and convinced myself that the other was empty. The tall man then took the two in his hands, passed them from one to another, behind his back, for a minute or two, and then presented them to me. I had tried in vain to note some peculiarity by which I might recognize the loaded one. They were precisely alike, and I was forced to choose at haphazard between them. I did so, and was proceeding, with a good deal of trepidation, to examine the weapon, and ascertain whether it was loaded or not.

"Hold!" cried the tall man; "I will very soon decide that matter for you."

So saying, he grasped the other pistol, and, advancing to the spot where I stood, raised it slowly till the muzzle was within one foot of my forehead. Was it the loaded pistol or the empty one? Was it life or death? It was an awful question, and a terrible moment; but I had no idea of showing the white feather then, and I looked calmly in his eye, as his finger pressed the trigger, and the cap exploded. Bang! the piece went off, and I thought that I felt the ball penetrating my temple. At all events, however, my brain was uninjured, for, at the same instant that I heard the report, the whole

scene around me changed, as if it had been part of a spectacle at the theatre, and I found myself standing it the centre of a vast hall, splendidly lighted, and surrounded by white-robed figures, each one having a brilliant star upon his left breast and another upon his forehead.

Excessively astonished and bewildered, I put my hand to my head, half-fearing that I would still find my skull shattered to pieces. Before I had quite time to settle the matter, sundry white-robed individuals hoisted me on their shoulders, and bore me around the hall in triumph, proclaiming me, with loud acclamations and bursts of martial music, an honorary member and a knight of the "Brotherhood of the Morning Star."

I had often heard of the fantastic association so named, but had more than suspected it of being a myth, when I was thus strangely thrust in the midst of it. It had been gotten up as a body of "Regulators," or administrators of Lynch law, in a district of country where regular statute laws and courts of justice were unknown.

Everything relating to this singular association was kept a profound secret. They were known by their acts alone. Every heinous crime was sure to be overtaken by swift and terrible punishment; but who were the judges or executioners, no one knew.

Any one who might intrude upon the domain of the brotherhood, was put upon his trial, as Frontin, Maubert and myself had been. No oaths were administered to the knights, who were bound in honor only.

As I had suspected at the time, the torture was in no instance carried to extremities. At a certain fixed point, sufficient to try the candidate's nerves to the utmost, but still within the limits of human endurance, the ordeal was always brought to a close, and the tortures passed on to something else.

The pistol fired at me was ingeniously prepared, so that the ball was retained harmlessly within it. At the instant of firing, the "brothers" who had gathered round me threw off their black mantles, and dispersed in every direction, so that the room and all it contained became suddenly visible.

When I returned to Clairault, the next morning, I told the most marvelous stories about what I had seen, but cautioned them all not to visit the terrible castle, as they valued their lives.

ROSE LEGENDS.

THAT the rose is queen among the flowers there can be no shadow of doubt, if we consider the amount of attention it has received in the past, and especially of late years, from that traditional period when, quite thornless,

> High in Paradise,
> By the four rivers, the first roses blew,

Whether it be the wild-brier of the simplest sort, as it luxuriates in the hedgerow; whether it be a more favored variety reveling on some southern wall, and doing so with careless ease; or whether it be of the foreign kind, that after years of care doth "down the alleys shine afar;" in either case, all less endowed or less attended blooms serve as accessories to lend the beauty of completeness to the scene.

Now the rose has some "virtue to boast," as Dr. Watts put it, "above all the flowers of the field," or it could not have found so large a space in early legends as it has done. Saints Ambrose and Basil inform us that it had no drawback from its virtues in Eden; and Milton, following in their wake, describes the garden as being stored with

> Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.

Harpocrates, the secret-keeper, was brided to silence with a rose; and Robert Browning had in his mind the legend when, in "Isobel's Child," he used the phrase, "Red as a rose of Harpocrate." If, however, Sir John Mandeville were an authority on this matter of color, the redness had a much later origin than the time of Harpocrates, for the author of the "Voiage and Traivaile" tells us that a Jewish maid of Bethlehem was beloved by a man named Hamuel, a brutish sot. She rejected his suit; and he, in revenge, accused the maiden of offences for which she was condemned to be burned alive. She was brought to the stake; but, by a miracle, the

flames burned her accuser to a cinder, and did her no harm. The fagots by which she was surrounded became a garden of roses, the burning brands becoming red ones, and those that were not kindled becoming white ones.

Quite a different origin is given for the color of the yellow variety. Mussulman tradition accounts for it in a very simple way. It says that when Mohammed was journeying from earth to Paradise, the drops of sweat which fell on the earth from the forehead of the Prophet became white roses; but that the drops of sweat which fell from Al Borak, the animal on which he rode, became yellow roses. We must not lay much stress upon the tradition, for yellow roses did not come even from the land of the Prophet of Islam, but from Germany. Historic doubts, however, apart, it is pleasant to be told that this flower was sacred to Eros and Aphrodite, to Cupid and Venus, and was an emblem not only of joy and love, but a symbol also of prudence.

The doubtfulness of legend in this matter is of small moment when we come to consider that the rose has a history which goes a long way farther back than some of the traditions themselves. It was well known to the ancient Greeks and Romans. Herodotus, for instance, writes of roses in the garden of Midas, the son of Gordius, in Phrygia, that had sixty leaves, which grew of themselves, and had a more agreeable fragrance than all the rest. The Centifolia is said to have been existent with the Greeks, and a great favorite, not only for its beauty of form but also for its perfume. At feasts, the roses were lavishly used by both the Greeks and the Romans. Fabulous sums were spent to have them at all seasons. In the time of the Republic, the people had their cups of Falerian wine swimming with blooms; and the Spartan soldiers, after the battle of Cirraha, refused to drink any wine that was not perfumed with roses; while at the Regatta of Baiæ, the whole surface of the Lucrine lake was strewn with the flowers. Nero at his banquetings showered rose-water upon his guests from a hole in the ceiling; and when he honored the house of a noble with his presence, the host was compelled to have his fountains playing rose-water. Indeed, on such occasions the ground was covered with rose-leaves, garlands of the flowers decorated the brows and necks of the guests, and a rose-pudding found a place in the repast itself. The Sybarites slept on beds stuffed with rose-leaves; the tyrant Dionysius had his couch filled with them; Verus would travel with a garland on his head and round his neck, and over his litter he had a thin net with rose-leaves intertwined. Antiochus luxuriated upon a bed of blooms even in winter days and nights; and when Cleopatra entertained Antony, she had roses covering the floor to a depth, it is said, of an ell. We are told that Heliogabalus supplied so many at one of his banquets that several of his guests were suffocated in the endeavor to extricate themselves from the abundance; he drank rose-wine to help digestion; he bathed in the same sort of liquid; and he had the public swimming-baths filled with the wine of the rose. No wonder the ancients became unwell after breathing and eating and drinking and wearing and reclining on and walking over the fragrant flowers. But the worst of it was that when they became ill, they were given a rose-draught; and no matter what the ailment was, the same thing was prescribed in some form or other. Oftener than not, the poor patient would succumb under the delicious treatment, and he would cease from living in consequence of a ruined digestion arising from a surfeit of sweets,

> Or quick effluvia darting through the brain,
> Die of a rose in aromatic pain.

Doubtless, the immoderate use of roses by the ancients led in after-days to their being relegated to their proper sphere in the garden; for although we have had the Wars of Roses in our modern times, the flowers were only plucked as a symbol. Now, in the garden the rose is about as much at home as it is in poetry. In the garden, there is nothing more charming than the rose in bloom; and in poetry there is no poet worthy of the name who has not consecrated it and enshrined it in his verse. How charmingly this has been done! Let the author of the "Lady of the Lake" speak for them all when he says:—

The rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,
And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
The rose is sweetest washed with morning dew,
And love is loveliest when embalmed in tears.
Oh, wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,
I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,
Emblem of hope and love through future years!

But the rose is really useful as well as beautiful, despite its misemployment by the ancients, and notwithstanding the artificial

character of the course of its development. The medicinal qualities of the fruit of the rose are well known, for it has time out of mind been considered as an astringent; and Wiseman in his "Surgery" recommends "fountain-water with rose-water and sugar of roses" as a cooling draught. Rose-vinegar is used for toilet and other purposes, and the conserve of the flowers is held in high esteem as a confection. The chief employment of the bloom, however, is in the manufacture of rose-water and otto of roses.

Rose-water is extensively made in India. At Ghazipore, in Bengal, there are hundreds of acres laid out for the purpose. The harvest is in March and April; and the result of the distillation is to supply about one quart of rose-water from each thousand of the blooms; but adulteration is very much resorted to, oil of sandal-wood being the medium; and the people of India do not seem to mind much whether they get the odor of the rose or the sandal for their money. It is comparatively cheap where it is made, costing two or three shillings a quart, even when unadulterated.

Otto or attar of roses is much more important and expensive. The origin of this condensed perfume is told in one of the romantic stories of the East. It is said that Noorjehan Begum, the favorite wife of Jehan-Geer, was walking in her garden, through which ran a stream of rose-water, when she noticed some oily particles floating on the surface. She had them skimmed off; and their aroma was found to be so delicious, that means were devised to produce the precious essence in a more regular way. The method is an extension of that which is used to produce rose-water, but it takes a thousand trees to supply about two ounces of attar, and its value is seldom less than twenty pounds sterling. At that price, and unadulterated, it is sold mainly to Europeans, while in a less pure form it is vended in the native bazaars. It is bought by the Westerns, however, for manufacturing purposes, and not to be used in its pure condition. Thus Pereira, in his "Elements of Materia Medica and Therapeutics," declares that "attar of roses is employed for scenting only. In the shops, various fumes are sold which owe their odor to the attar. Thus, oil for the hair, sold as *huile antique ronge a la rose*, is merely olive oil colored by alkanet and scented with the attar. Milk of roses also contains the attar. Several compound scents owe a portion of their fragrance to this oil, as lavender water." So that Tom Moore, though not literally, was largely correct when he affirmed in his "Twopenny Post-bag" that

> Otto of roses,
> Refreshing all noses,
> Shall sweetly exhale from our whiskers and wigs.

Extensive rose-farms exist in Turkey, at Adrianople, Brusa, Ushak, and the low countries of the Balkan generally. In the last mentioned district, seventy thousand ounces of attar are said to be produced in each season, and there it takes two thousand flowers to the drachm! Indeed, the queen of flowers is found in all the temperate parts of the earth, and even in the far north, and it will grow almost anywhere with a little needful care; but those of Cashmere surpass all others for beauty and fragrance. Our roses are bright, and there are roses of other lands which are claimed to be brighter, as, for instance, those of France and Damascus; yet

> Who has not heard of the vale of Cashmere,
> With its roses the brightest that earth ever gave?

AFTER.

BY EDWARD BORDMI.

IF some day in the after years,
As one a-weary of the strife,
With nothing left save bitter fears
That mine had been a wasted life—

Should sense of failure bring despair,
And sin's remorse increase the pain,
Without a friend the grief to share,
What joy can then for me remain?

Ah, this—that once in summer weather,
Ere yet we dreamed of youth's decline,
We spent one livelong day together,
That I was yours, and you were mine.

JOHN DILLINGHAM'S MONEY.

BY MARY T. CALDOR.

"WHAT! have you never heard the story? Ah, let me tell it to you, then, it is so pretty."

And sweet, lovely Madame King patted her soft white hands together gleefully, and laughed joyously into my eager face, when she saw that I was as charmed to be a listener, as she to take the part of story-teller.

Madame King, let me premise, is the delight of our eyes and the gladness of our hearts, though she is grandmother to bonny Kate and sturdy Charlie, and though the lovely curls, so carefully brushed away from the smooth forehead, where she will have no ugly care-marks lined by worry and fretting, are as snowy and silvery as the whitest you ever saw. A dear old lady, who kept her heart young, and her temper sweet and sunny; who is as much a belle in our drawing-room as her fairy granddaughter; who helps our social life to be bright and vivacious, and keeps us sweet and wholesome as a breath of pure air. She sat herself comfortably in the arm-chair, and thrust those daintily attired feet, of which her son is so proud, contentedly upon the hassock I set for them, and commenced promptly.

"To be sure, I remember now, the Willoughbys were a little out of our set when you first came home from the academy. They had voluntarily retired from a great deal of the town gayety. But they were too charming to be readily dropped by the sensible people, and we did have a good many of that sort. I always insisted upon that. But after that disastrous failure, and the paralytic stroke of Mr. Willoughby's, a good many were delicate about intruding too persistently; and they were very sensitive and proud, especially the mother. But what a grand dame she was in the palmy days of her husband's wealth! What an air she had! I have never seen countess or grand-duchess since that could be half so stately and gracious, both in one. But, dear me, how I ramble! Stop me when I get out of the path, dear, and set me back.

"A proud, sensitive family suddenly stranded in poverty from out the very fullness of prosperity. That is the situation you are to imagine. There were three girls and one son, the helpless paralytic father, and the beautiful, stately mother. The son was unfortunately the youngest of the family, and he was at college when the crash came, just entering upon his junior year. They kept him there till he graduated. Heaven only knows by what heroic sacrifices it was done! But those brave women managed it somehow. Grace took pupils in music. Nelly painted charmingly, and must have found sale somwhere at the shops, for she was always busily at work on such lovely bits of satin and china as the *bric-a-brac* shops have on the Christmas counters. And Maude took care of a little class of children very much, I dare say, after the Kindergarden fashion of these days, only we never heard the name then. I want so much to describe Maude to you, but I've no idea how to do it."

She paused, laughed a low, melodious gurgle, and clasped those still pretty hands of hers enthusiastically.

"Well, there, I can only say she was the loveliest creature I ever saw out of canvas, —in real flesh and blood! You've a vivid imagination, I know; fill up the outline I've given just the best you can, and then I'm sure the picture won't equal winsome Maude Willoughby. I was very fond of the other girls, but over Maude I was always as gushing as a raw school-girl.

"I think I was their most intimate acquaintance after the dark days came. You know I have been very fortunate there, dear. I really think I would not exchange our position of being just on the meridian grade of social rank for the best advantages the highest aristocracy can offer. One can be friends below and above, and have ready sympathy for each, and that is delightful. There are such beautiful people in both places that it is a joy and benefit to know them all."

"We all know what an 'open sesame' you carry with you, dear Madame King," I ventured. "I'm sure no one can help loving and trusting you."

"Yes, everybody is good to me, everbody always has been good. It's very strange how blest I have been!" murmured the dear

old lady thoughtfully. "But sometimes I think there is a good spirit fluttering before me. Now that day, I'm sure it wouldn't have been strange, considering their pride, if they had shut up their hearts to me entirely. And the greatest marvel was Mr. Dillingham. I'm sure he ought to have bitten off my head to pay for my audacity. It was the right thing to expect. I've often wondered if the unseen influences were about me, that everything came out so beautifully."

And she paused again, and looked out wistfully and dreamily into the cloudless blue of the bit of sky we could see between the lace curtains of the window. And then she broke in again with her apologetic laugh.

"But I don't get on a step. And how stupid you will think me! Now I will go straight to the story without a digression, if that is possible for such a foolish creature."

I went out on my calls one day, and was passing the humble little house which the Willoughbys had rented, without the slightest intention of calling, because I was rather burdened with errands, when somehow, just as I glanced carelessly at the door, the thought came that the last time I saw the girls at church they looked graver and sadder. And with this I looked again, and there was no sign of Nelly at the window where her painting table was always set, and not a glimpse of anybody else where I almost always caught a friendly nod and smile.

"Is anything wrong, I wonder? I must stop and see," said I to myself.

And I turned about promptly, and mounted the steps. Just as I stretched out my hand to the bell-knob the door opened, and the little maid-of-all-work, who went in to help them every day, as I knew, came out hastily.

"I was just going to ring, Katie," I said to her, "but you've saved me the trouble."

"Yes'm," answered she, but not quite in her usual breezy tone, "please walk in without me. I'm going home—for good."

The last was broken by a little sob, to hide which she turned hastily, and, closing the door, ran down the steps.

I followed the direction her waving hand had given, and walked straight through the open door of the sitting-room upon a most unexpected tableau.

There was Mrs. Willoughby in the centre of the room, with her three daughters clinging around her, all dissolved in tears. Evidently some great trouble was upon them.

Just imagine my consternation at such an intrusion as mine! I tried to retreat across the threshold, and give some warning of my vicinity without allowing them to know I had seen anything.

But Grace caught a glimpse of me, and started forward.

"O mamma," she stammered, "here is Madame King."

And then Mrs. Willoughby turned, and gently disengaged the clinging arms of her children.

Grace's face was flushed with confusion, and perhaps with shame, and her sisters looked dismayed and startled; but Mrs. Willoughby—dear me, do you suppose Victoria in Windsor Castle ever had half as much graceful composure? She came forward in that slow stateliness of hers, and held out her hand.

"Good-morning, Madame King; pray take a seat, and excuse us that you find us agitated and foolish."

And at this all my panic and shame dropped away from me. And I shook her hand back, and said plainly:—

"I'm sure you know that I came in here accidentally without announcement. Katie met me at the steps, and showed me in, so I couldn't ring. Pray send me right away if I can be of no service. And if I can help you in any way, set me at work promptly, I beg of you."

And then the next minute I had Maude's warm, soft arms about my neck, and her wet cheek was pressed close to mine.

"O mamma, we couldn't bear anybody else but Madame King, could we?" she said. "But I'm sure she'll find comfort somewhere. And she won't be stupid, nor set up, nor governor-generally"——

And here the sweet, agitated voice dropped its quaver, and, to my astonishment, she burst into a laugh, which the next minute was closed rather dismally by Grace and Nell.

"No, indeed she won't," said I promptly, re-assured from my vague alarm, as I patted the lovely head, across which was thrown a bright scarlet scarf. "Now tell the flying grandmother all about it, little Red Riding Hood."

You see I only said that because of the scarlet worsted head-gear,—just the veriest accident that I chose the name. But it was just what was needed to obtain their confidence.

Maude's lip quivered again.

"Ah, yes, dear, soft, kind grandmother, that is just it," she said. "The wolf is really at the door,—the gaunt, cruel, relentless wolf. We have just come to face the truth, all of us; and that's why all this outcry. We're not a weakly set in general."

"I should think not," declared I emphatically. Gracie had recovered her self-possession by this time. She pulled a chair close by her mother, and took up her mother's hand and kissed it.

"Maudie is putting it in rather a tragic light, isn't she, mamma? Perhaps we heard a howl in the distance, but I'm not so sure of the wolf yet. Ned's next letter may tell something grand. And I'm sure I shall paint the most wonderful screen to-morrow that was ever seen, and Mrs. Lambert will give me a fabulous price for it, and entreat me for another."

"If there were only one more unsearched box in the attic. You remember what a mine I found before. Actually, Madame King, three broken rings, an old watch-key, and a silver cover to a toilet powder-box. The Jew gave me the munificent sum of two dollars for the lot, and how gay I returned to mater and the girls!"

"Try, try again!" said Grace, trying to look gay now, but signally failing.

"My girls have outgrown a private school, and are going to the academy now. And poor Ned has been sick, and been obliged to hand over to a greedy old doctor his last month's earnings," added Maude, in further explanation.

Dear Mrs. Willoughby passed her hand wearily across her forehead, as she said:—

"I don't know what Madame King will think of all this incoherent complaint, children. But we must confess to her that Ned's failing health has been a severe blow, while we miss"——

And here she paused abruptly. There was a moaning sound from the little room whose door was ajar, and, with a hasty "Pray excuse me," she hurried thither.

"My father is worse," said Maude. "O Madame King, we have tried not to complain! but these are hard times."

Hard indeed! Those dainty, delicate creatures had bravely faced the storm, and tried to smile beneath its cutting sleet, but strength and courage were going out. I could see that for myself.

"My dears," said I, "you need not fear to trust me with your troubles. And something must be done to help you. Tell me what I need to know before your mother returns."

The eldest daughter flushed hotly, but Maude touched her warm red lips to my hand as she answered:—

"It is bad enough. Ned's letter should have brought his remittance toward the rent. Instead, it is wild and incoherent with his self-reproaches at being sick and giving to a doctor the money we are needing so much. My scholars have grown beyond my help, and are promoted to the academy. Nell has no orders ahead, and Grace is the only one to bring in her pittance this week. The ridiculous part of it is that we tried to cheat ourselves, and made believe everything would come out right, until that invitation yonder came, and then when I said I could not accept because I hadn't a dress respectable enough to wear, mother burst into tears, and of course the rest of us gave in, and we were Niobes, as you said. There! now everything is confessed we may quiet down a little perhaps."

She tossed back to the table the daintily embossed party invitation, and colored faintly as I said:—

"The writing looks familiar. I should think Maxwell Thorne had written the address."

"So he did. Absurd taste for a gentleman of his expectations to be looking into Castle Dismal for a ball-partner, isn't it?"

"If he knew; he is so generous and noble," began I.

But now it was Maud's turn to crimson, and how her eyes flashed, as she cried fiercely:—

"I would die before I would have him help us. Indeed, I should die of shame."

"There, there, Maudie, you mustn't be absurd," cried Grace, coming over to her, and bending down to kiss the hot cheek, and letting a spray of tears flash down likewise.

But here Mrs. Willoughby returned, looking grave and anxious. And I, though I declare I had almost as soon have dared to offer a penny to a princess, plucked up heart, and said as cheerfully as I could:—

"You know I am by no means rich, and so understand what straights people will sometimes come to for lack of this wretched money. So you'll be friendly to me to let me lend you my humble purse to-day, and I

think when we talk matters all over we shall see an outlook that will be more cheery."

Dear Mrs. Willoughby! how dreadfully hard it was for her to take that money! Don't I know your soldier, who rushes hot and excited before the whizzing bullets, all fired by music and enthusiasm, possesses nothing so brave a heart as was hers when her reluctant fingers closed over that little purse, and she forced her proud lips to say:—

"Thank you, old friend! I can take it from you. May Heaven bless you!"

There we sat, and talked, and planned. And I was let into the secret of many a brave struggle and hard battle. It was rougher times for them than I had dreamed. The helpless and mindless paralytic suffered for the accustomed luxuries. Ned had been singularly unfortunate, without deserving the slightest blame for any of his mischances. They had laughed and jested while they hid from the world the sharply tormenting cares which confronted them on all sides.

I went away at last, feeling painfully anxious, and most deeply sympathetic.

Now, there's something strange about what I did. I want you to notice that, and tell me if it was because I was "led," as some people phrase it.

I could not do my errands at the shops without going home, for I had pressed my purse into Mrs. Willoughby's hand. I had no heart for calls, so I turned leisurely, but just as I was passing the great windows of the banking-house I said to myself:—

"I might go in and talk with Mr. Dillingham about that investment of Tom's. I've been meaning to do it for some time."

And while I stood deliberating a crowd came surging around the corner, a tribe of street gamins and such, running before a square of soldiers, who were evidently *en route* for the railroad station.

That decided me. "I will get out of the *mêlée*," I said, and hurried up the stone steps, across the corridor, into the private counting-room, where I had before consulted the great banker.

I met two gentlemen coming out as I opened the door. I thought to myself that they looked angry or disappointed, and I was certain that Mr. Dillingham was in one of his surly humors, for which, I fear, he is somewhat notorious. His lips were set in a grim, straight line, and his eyes had a steely glitter; and though he tried when he saw me, he could not muster a very pleasant smile as he set the chair for me.

"Ah, Madame King, is it you? Well, it will be refreshing to hear you talk after those hypocritical, wheedling rascals. So you don't favor Tom's trusting himself among the bulls and bears. Well, I can't say as I blame you. I shall take your view of the case, and I told Tom so. I'll see that he is all right."

"Thank you," answered I, eagerly, for I was really grateful to find him on my side. "You relieve my mind by the assurance. One can't afford any risks with the little property we have, when we want so much. Oh, it is so much wanted!"

You see I was thinking of the scene I had just left.

"It's nothing but a curse!" growled Mr. Dillingham. "Why, Madame King, I did not think to find you a Mammon worshiper. You're the last one I should have thought of."

"Ah, but one sees so much need. It will do so much good!" I sighed.

"Bah!" he said roughly; "it's the plague of my life. I am beset day and night by a set of unscrupulous rogues, hypocrites, and swindlers, blast them!"

And he strode angrily forward, and brandished the paper in his hand.

"My dear Mr. Dillingham," began I in a little trepidation, I confess.

But he interrupted me, not very politely, to be sure, but so earnestly that he was pardoned.

"Madame King, I wonder if you couldn't give me some good advice. I have a great respect for your—heart, and this is a case where the head is at discount, if I'm not mistaken. Did you see those fellows who met you at the door? They've been here urging me to make my will, and leave their especial religious charity the bulk of my property. Yesterday I had one of the overseers of the college delicately hinting that a new professorship and building were greatly needed. The day before it was somebody else. Every day it is some one. They are wearing the life and spirit out of me, and the worst of it is, that, while I loathe and hate them, I know that there's one sort of right in what they say. I have a great fortune, and I have no direct heirs. It ought to do some good somehow. Heaven knows I've had none out of it!"

"O Mr. Dillingham," I gasped, "no good? when you may relieve so much misery, make so many hearts glad!"

"Make so many cheats and rogues!" he scowled. "Look on my check-book there, and see the daily record of the money flung out, and let me tell you when I do it I firmly believe I am abetting pauperism, and encouraging roguery. What I would like to do would be to give somewhere and be sure I had accomplished a positive good. But I can't see the assurance. My money is a curse to me. No one is sincere with me. I am cajoled, or feared, or intimidated. No one loves me, the man, nor cares to see my best welfare accomplished."

He looked at me so wistfully that I had no heart to be angry.

"To be sure," I said, more to myself than to him, "to be sure, you have no wife, no children."

And then, will you believe it, I burst into tears. I was nervous and tired, I suppose, perhaps exhausted with the sympathy that had gone out from me to the Willoughbys.

But the most astonishing thing was the change that came over this grim, hard, sarcastic banker.

"You are—actually—crying for me?" he said, slowly, and the glum look faded out of his face, and he put on an odd, tremulous, childish smile, and said twice:—

"Thank you, Madame King, thank you."

"O Mr. Dillingham!" I cried out then, brushing off my tears, "you shall hear the story of my afternoon's visit. I know it will be sacred with you. Let me tell you what a dreary load of care, what an endless amount of safety and hope, your money might give, and your check-book yonder scarcely know the difference."

"Tell me first, if you were in my place what would you do with this accursed money of mine? Would you let the charities have it, and trust that somehow the needy ones, and not the salaries, or the impostors, will have the benefit?"

"I would give it away myself, and know that it did just what I intended," answered I energetically.

"I am haunted by beggars and my own conscience, and I know I am not well," he said pathetically. "God knows I wish to settle the thing rightly if I can see the way."

"Hear my story," I said, "and I presume there are a hundred just like it all around us."

And I told it, helped, I do believe, by some invisible inspiration; and I made him see those proud, sensitive, honorable women struggling to keep off the wolf from the door as they had shown me.

When I had finished I gathered up my shawl and parasol, and turned to the door, frightened to think how I had bearded this surly millionaire in his den, and not daring to wait to hear the result.

I suppose I took a little cold, and the excitement may have been too much for me. Any way, I was sick in bed for a week, but then I took Tom's first offer of a short drive, and went over to the Willoughbys.

And if you believe it, I came in just in season for another tableau.

There were two huge trunks in the middle of the sitting-room, and the girls were dancing about them with exclamations of admiration and delight, and on the sofa lay Ned, pale and sick-looking, to be sure, but for all that as happy as a king, as he watched his mother's brightened face, and the girl's extravagant delight.

Maude seized me in her strong young arms, and put me into the easy-chair, and began dragging forth from the trunk a series of glistening fabrics.

"What do you think of that, grandmother of Red Riding Hood?" she shouted. "Velvet! the silkiest and finest you can find at Arnold's won't match it. Behold—genuine camel's hair! tassa, straight from the looms of India! pena, dainty as the morning cobweb! only at Manilla could you find such delicacy! Shall I not dance at the party in goodly array! Fairy godmother, fairy godmother, wish me joy! wish us all joy!"

"What does the madcap mean?" I asked, in amazement, turning to the others bewilderedly.

"I think your little purse was indeed a fairy talisman," answered Mrs. Willoughby, and a tear glistened in her eye, though her stately tones were still unfaltering. "The next day we received a legacy, such a generous fortune indeed for us, that we can look serenely at the wolf in the distance."

"A legacy,—a fortune!" I stammered. "I do not comprehend."

"Nor indeed do I, except that the money is actually deposited in the bank to my order. But we received a letter saying that the writer forwarded, on account of an old debt contracted during my husband's business life, a certain sum, with its interest. The

letter is only signed 'A friend.' In his prosperous days my husband was very generous, and careless, too. There is no further explanation, but of course it is conscience money. And we who are lifted out of our trials and cares cannot think anyway except gratefully of the sender, whatever he may have done."

"I should think not, indeed," I answered, while a sharp suspicion darted through my mind. "Let me see the letter, please."

And sight was knowledge in this case. I knew the ragged writing well enough. Tom had a letter that very morning refusing to give him the coveted chance of speculation, in just such queer chirography.

To cover my little exclamation of pleasure, I asked:—

"And the trunks"——

"From the same hand, bless it!" laughed Maude. "He says that they belonged to one dead these twenty years, who would be too happy to give them were she alive. Everything is just around again in the style. See this brocade!"

Well, that was a happy visit of mine, and I made the carriage go from thence straight to the banking-house.

A clerk was in with Mr. Dillingham, but he sent him out, and looked up to my excited face with twinkling eyes.

"The Lord bless you!" I said, trying not to cry; "if only you could come and see the happiness, John Dillingham!"

He laughed,—ah, so different was the laugh from the old sarcastic bitterness.

"I think I should like a little reward, my wise directress. When will you introduce me there? My first investment under your guidance looks as if it would be satisfactory."

"But what about the debt? I won't have your good deed marred by a falsehood," I said, saucily.

"Well, there was a debt, certainly. Mind, I didn't tell you on which side I stood. The letter will bear testimony of that. I was one of Willoughby's creditors, my unsuspecting mentor. See the joke?"

He laughed with so much zest I couldn't help joining him.

As I wiped off the tears, that were not all from laughter, I said solemnly:—

"John Dillingham, never abuse your money and its power again."

"No," said he, full as gravely, "Madame King, I never will. Please heaven, we will look around still more. I might have lost that fifteen thousand in stocks, and never have given it a thought. Now I have learnt that it gives a chance of health and life to that over-worked young fellow, and comforts of life to a whole family, to say nothing of the lifted heart-aches and cares. God sent you, Madame King, I do believe. At last I have seen the waters return to me my scattered seed."

Well, I managed to introduce him to the family, and do you know the happiest thing is yet to tell. Two years afterward he married Grace, the eldest daughter, and before he died he had the happiness of a glad and loving home-life, though it was short. He was right in saying that disease was upon him, for he only lived five years. He left a generous income to his wife, and the rest of the princely fortune in trust for her to give away in charity. And right regally does she use the power. I can tell of three lonely women, whose broken health deprived them of their employment as teacher, governess, and book-keeper, but who face their cares fearlessly, because of the salary which is still paid to them from dead John Dillingham's bounty. Myriad are the cases that I have known where a hundred dollars has allowed a poor widow to keep her ambitious boy another year at school or college; has permitted an expensive surgical operation in some needy home; yes, even has fitted out a neat bridal *trousseau* for some worthy needlewoman. I go to them myself with all the wants that I discover. The world knows nothing about it. There is no great expensive building anywhere with his name emblazoned upon it. No endowment, no fellowship anywhere to enhance his fame. But every month of every year I know that some sensitive, struggling heart gushes out in gratitude, and calls on Heaven to bless his memory. And if he can see, if he can know, I am sure John Dillingham has received his best reward, and knows that his money has surely obtained its richest investment.

A RUNAWAY ADVENTURE.

BY W. H. MACY.

IT was Tom Webber's turn to finish the yarn for the amusement of us, his watchmates, and the twinkle in his eyes indicated that the fountain of his invention had not yet run dry. If half the stories he had seriously told us had been true, there would have been no question as to his having borne a charmed life.

"Did I ever tell you about the time I ran away from the Logan, on the coast of Kamtchatka?" asked Tom.

"No, no!" answered a chorus of vocies. "Fire away, Tom, and give us the yarn."

And we settled ourselves to be entertained, while Tom sat thinking a few moments to get his strings in tune for drawing the long bow.

"I was younger twenty years ago than I am now, and a deal more wild and foolish, though you may say that is needless. We were not badly used on board the Logan, and she was quite as good a floating home as the average of whalers in those days; and yet several of the young chaps had firmly resolved to desert from her on the first opportunity that offered. As we were in the middle of a nor'west season when my story begins, no such chance seemed likely to offer itself until we should drop our anchor at one the Sandwich Islands in the fall. But it came about in rather an unexpected manner.

"It was in the season of '53 or '54, I am not now certain which; but, at any rate, it was during the time of the Crimean War, as you will see presently. We had not found the polar whales, as we expected, in the Anadir Sea, and so had worked to the southward, thinking to make up our season on the right-whaling grounds of Kamtchatka. We got among the whales, and had pretty fair luck; but we found that many others beside ourselves had made the same movement, for there were ships in sight almost every day, and the whales were kept stirred up and gallied all the time.

"One day, when the wind was light and the sea unusually smooth for this part of the ocean, we had been down with the boats in chase of whales all through the forenoon; but they were very shy, and we had not been near enough to grease a lance. About noon, the captain made the signal of recall, hoisting the boats as fast as they arrived.

"The second mate's boat, in which I pulled the tub oar, was the last to come alongside, and the steward had already served the dinner in the cabin, and passed the word to the captain.

"'Mr. Sherman,' said the captain, 'never mind about hoisting your boat on the cranes. Let her drop right astern, with a couple of hands in her. We'll get dinner at once, fore and aft, and, by that time, we shall have a chance to shore on and try again. Come down from aloft, Sam, and get your dinner. There's a fog-bank coming down upon us now, but I think it will be clear again within half an hour.'

"Dick Archer and I remained in the boat, having our dinner passed down to us, and it was veered astern into the ship's wake. By the time the captain and officers had left the deck, the fog had shut down very thick.

"The ship was lying aback, and even the helmsman had been allowed to lock the wheel, and get his dinner with the rest. There was no one to be seen on board the ship for the moment; but, presently, my chum, Joe Fox—the wildest, most harum-scarum lad of all the Logan's crew—came aft, and, looking over the taffrail, beckoned to us, indicating that he had something confidential to say. I hauled in on the warp until it was nearly straight up and down, so that Joe was right over my head.

"'Hold on hard!' said he.

"And before I really understood his intention, he had descended the rope, hand over hand, and was at my side in the boat.

"'Now's your time, Tom,' said he. 'Let us give the old Logan the slip, and be off on a cruise. We'll just drop down into the fog, and in five minutes I'll defy the Devil himself to find us, if we keep quiet.'

"'But,' said I, 'this is no good time or place.'

"'Oh, but we must have no buts,' interrupted Joe. 'This is the time and place, and, if we really want to have a runaway cruise, we must be quick about it, and silent too.'

"And, before I could remonstrate, he had cut the warp, and we were adrift. I had half a mind to call out for help, but was ashamed to do so now.

"'Don't show the white feather, Tom,' said Fox. 'Dick Archer, if you make a breath of noise, I'll brain you with this paddle!'

"Already the ship had forged away from us, so that she was growing dim in the fog.

"'Step the mast, Dick,' said our self-appointed leader. 'Bear a hand, there.'

"The sails flapped for an instant, but the sheet was drawn aft to the cleet, and away we slid into the fog-bank, Joe having seized the steering-oar himself. I must confess I hoped just then to hear some sounds of alarm from the ship; but all was quiet. She was gone quickly from our view, and our distance was rapidly increasing.

"Here, now, was about as foolish an undertaking as could well be imagined, and so we began to think—at least Dick and I did—as soon as it was too late to repent. Three young lads starting off in an open boat, with very little provisions and water; and this, too, in a high latitude, where heavy winds prevailed, and no land near us but the rocky shore of Kamtchatka. We began to express our doubts and fears, but were cut short by the stout-headed and impetuous Joe.

"'Oh, what are you worrying about?' said he. 'Here we have been talking for months about a chance to run away, and now here's one all made for us and you seem afraid to improve it. Why, we can't be a great way from the land, for the mountains were in sight yesterday from the ship. We can coast along the shore to Peptropaulaska, if we don't strike upon some other Russian settlement sooner; or, at the worst, we can get aboard some other ship, and that will be a change, at any rate. Hurrah for change and adventure! Ah, they've woke up on board the ship! But they won't find us, never fear! It won't clear up for an hour or two, and, when it does, we shall have a long start of them, and if we douse the masts and sails they can't see us.'

"The ship was signaling with loud blasts of fog-horns and frantic peals of bell-ringing. But the sound showed that we were already quite distant.

"Soon after we heard a musket fired, and still later the report of the old carriage-gun; and, from the direction of the sound, it was evident that the ship had run off to leeward in search of us, but had shaped her course wildly astray. There was not one chance in a hundred of her finding the boat, in the absence of any responsive signal from us.

"The fogs in the North Pacific are so uncertain that no human foresight can predict how long thick weather will last; and, though our captain had been confident that it would clear up in half an hour, it was as dense as ever when we luffed-to at sundown.

"During all this time we had been running through with a light breeze in a westerly direction, toward the coast; and we continued on the same tack, several hours into the night, without even hearing any sound of breakers. We had found ample time to reflect upon the madness of our undertaking, and even Joe Fox was much less bold and confident than he had been at the start.

"We had little idea of our position, and were uncertain whether we were to the northward or southward of the Russian port; but of one thing we were well-assured,—that the mountains of Kamtchatka were farther off than had been supposed. After much waste of words, it was decided to take down the mast, and lie-to for the remainder of the night, or until the weather cleared, hoping to find some ship in sight; for we would gladly have welcomed the sight of a sail, even if it had been the Logan herself.

"As we were greatly in need of rest, we lay down in the boat and gave up all care for the present, not even setting any look-out. Joe had the stern-sheets for his quarters, and Dick the bow; while I stretched myself out in the middle of the boat upon the oars, throwing a bight of the sail around me. And, as we all had our jackets on, we did not suffer from cold. Nature soon asserted her rights, notwithstanding my anxiety of mind, and I fell asleep.

"How long my nap lasted I do not know; but I was awakened by a rushing sound of waters, and a feeling as of a strong breeze or a draught in the air. I jumped to my feet to find myself overshadowed by a dark wall towering above my head. I threw out my hands, and felt my footing going from under me with a crash, and grasped a chain! By this time, I had my senses enough to know that I was clinging to the bobstays of a ship.

"The boat and my two comrades were gone like a flash, overwhelmed so quickly that we had no time even to call out to each other. I clung to the chain-bobstay as my

last and only hope, and I climbed up on the bowsprit, where I paused to get breath. I could hear voices on the bow of the ship, as of men talking earnestly, but in a strange gibberish of which I did not understand a word. Until I had recovered my wind so as to make my way in on deck, with loud shouts, they did not know of my presence.

"I could talk only in my own tongue, but I did my best, with pantomime and frantic gestures, to make them understand about the boat and my two shipmates. After a time, they succeeded in getting some inkling of the truth through their heads, when the ship was hove-to, and a boat lowered; but it was too late for any hope of saving anybody. I knew only thus far the ship was a man-of-war, as was plain from her guns and the number of men; and that her lookouts must have been carelessly kept, for they seemed to know very little about the unfortunate tragedy, except that the ship had struck something which had hardly stopped her way at all, and that they had found a strange man on board.

"What with my grief at the loss of my comrades, and my excitement at finding myself saved from death almost by a miracle, I was not in a humor to talk much. But, after the search had been given up,—for the boat did not venture far away into the fog and darkness,—and the ship had been kept on her course again, a little fellow who seemed to have just turned out from below was brought to me as an interpretor, and addressed me in cockney English. He held some station equivalent to what we would call a purser's steward, and told me his real name was Bill Brown, though I suspect that may have been a purser's name.

"Through this little fellow as a medium, my story was soon given to the captain and officers, and, in return, I learned that I was on board the Russian corvette—or, as we would say, sloop-of-war—Cronstadt, mounting twenty guns, and commanded by Captain Somebody, whose name the cockney could not pronounce any better than I could myself. If I had wanted to spell it, I should have thrown the whole alphabet into a bag, and then grabbed a handful of letters at random.

"The corvette had sailed two days before from Petropaulaska, on a cruise in search of two English whalers from Hobart Town, which were reported to be cruising on the ground. One of the whalers, named the Lady Blackwood, acting under a pretended license of letters of marque from the Colonial Governor of Van Dieman's Land, had captured and burned a small Russian coasting-vessel a few days before, and our skipper with the jaw-breaking name declared his intention of hanging the valorous Briton at the yard-arm as a pirate as soon as he could lay hands upon him.

"The crew of the Cronstadt were a rough, dirty set of fellows, and it struck me that, in spite of the despotic character of the Russian government, the discipline was not such as I had expected to find in a war vessel. However, that was none of my business. I was treated hospitably enough, considering that I had come on board without any invitation; and so soon forgot my past perils, and stood ready for the next adventure that might turn up.

"In the morning the fog cleared, and, the wind freshening, we continued working to the eastward all day and the following night.

"Another day broke on us with four sails in sight from the masthead. All these were whalers, without doubt, but the whalers in the seas were nearly all Americans, while only an English or a French vessel would be lawful prize for the corvette. The Russian ensign was hoisted on her gaff, and was promptly answered by three of the strangers showing the stars and stripes; but the fourth, which was about four miles astern of us, made no response. We hove round at once and gave chase, the stranger crowding on canvas to get away from us. A stern chase is proverbially a long one, but it was very soon evident that we were coming up with the whaler hand over hand.

"When within two miles of the chase, she hoisted an American flag; but it was not the full allowance of red stripes, and was altogether so clumsily made up that a glance through the telescope convinced us that it had been extemporized for the occasion.

"There was hardly a doubt now that this was the Lady Blackwood of which we were in pursuit. She was a clumsy old craft, bark-rigged, with ugly galleries, and her spars, lower masts, and all, painted black. She was no match in speed for the corvette, which I took to be of French build, and which quickly proved herself to be a great traveler. A shot fired from our bow-gun, even before we were within range, persuaded the chase to haul down his false bunting; and, seeing the hopelessness of his case, he hove-to,

hoisted his own British ensign, and then lowered it again in token of submission.

"The wind had by this time increased to a fresh gale, and was still blowing on. We ran as close as we dared under the lee of the prize, and ordered him, through the mouth of little Bill Brown, to send two of his whale-boats, these being lighter and safer in a heavy sea than any of the man-of-war's boats. The boat's crew, who came on board the Cronstadt, were detained there as prisoners; and twenty of the Russian seamen, in charge of a lieutenant, were sent on board the prize. And, as every man was a man to the Russian captain,—he wishing to prolong his cruise in search of the other English whaler,—it was suggested to me that I should go also as one of the crew.

"Anything for a change, and, nothing loath, I readily assented to this transfer. Our orders were to send the boat back with the captain and six more of the English crew, as it was desirable to take good care of the 'pirate,' as he was called, and also to reduce the number of prisoners, who were to be in charge of the prize crew.

"But, before the orders could be carried out, the gale was raging with great violence, and a dark, threatening squall gathered so that the risk was too great to attempt another trip with a boat between the two ships. No time was to be lost; so the signal being made to keep all fast with the boats, the corvette filled away on the northern tack, while we in the prize set the close-reefed main-topsail, and foresail, and bore up to Petropaulaska.

"When I jumped out of the boat upon the deck of the Lady Blackwood, a voice saluted me with 'Halloo, Tom,' and I grasped the hand of my shipmate, Dick Archer. Each appeared to the other as one risen from an ocean grave, for his astonishment was not less than mine. He had clung to the bow end of the whale-boat, after she had been broken in two by the cutwater of the Russians, and had been picked up by the Lady Blackwood within an hour afterward, so near had the two ships passed each other during the foggy night.

"We found on board the prize four Russians, who had been captured in the little consting-vessel, taken by her the week before, and these served to strengthen our force somewhat, the prize crew, including Dick and myself, amounting in all to twenty-seven. But we still had sixteen of the Hobart-Town crew to be guarded as prisoners, not having been able to send away the last boat-load, as had been intended. It was found necessary to confine them in the half-deck, or steerage, under a guard. But the English Captain Clavering was allowed to be at large, and to mess with the prize-master and us two Americans in the cabin, under a sort of parole. For I had made the Russian lieutenant understand who and what Dick was, and he was not confined with the English crew.

"Indeed, it seemed enough for the officer to know that we were both Americans, a people for whom he seemed to have the highest esteem and admiration. Captain Clavering was a fine physical specimen, and possessed of very pleasing manners and an insinuating address. He was evidently a very determined and resolute fellow, but he did not seem to me to be the sort of man to be freely trusted on his mere word of honor in a case like this, where his personal interest was so largely at stake. I wondered at the confidence which the prize-master placed in him; but, as I before argued, it was none of my business.

"The prize had, like most of the English colonial whalers, a good stock of liquor on board. And Captain Clavering also had a private lot of his own, of better quality, with which he was very generous. The Russian had an unfortunate weakness for drink; and, as both he and Clavering spoke a good smattering of French, they got on amazingly well together, and became jolly boon companions the very first evening of their acquaintance. This was all the more strange, as the lieutenant knew of his underhand act in taking the little schooner, and of the threats of his own commanding officer about hanging the Englishman at sight.

"The gale blew so hard by ten o'clock that it was found necessary to take in the foresail, and heave the bark to under her storm canvas. Grog was served to the Russian crew during the performance of this duty, and, after all was made snug, and the two magnates had again taken their old places at the cabin table, the bottle passed between them even more freely than before. Clavering had a hard head, and, moreover, having a purpose in view, did not drink as deeply as he pretended. After a time, he proposed to give the crew another glass all round; and, the lieutenant assenting, Archer and I were requested to take the bottles up

on the main deck, and serve it out when the watch was relieved at midnight. Clavering produced the bottles from his own state-room, saying, in his generous way:—

"'Give 'em a good stiff horn, boys, and don't forget the sentries here at the half-deck.'

"Something seemed to whisper to me that the liquor had been drugged, but, on tasting it, I could discover nothing peculiar. But it was no grog mixture, it was the genuine stuff, and the Muscovites had already enough, at the time of shortening sail, to put them in good trim.

"'Dick,' said I, 'there's going to be fun here before morning.'

"'Well, who cares? I don't,' he answered. 'It's none of our business.'

"Sure enough, we would as soon sail under Clavering as under the drunken Russian, and, had we a choice of our next port of entry between Hobart Town and Petropaulaska, would surely have chosen the former. And so, as directed, we did not forget the sentries at the half-deck.

"And now the prize-master, in the excitement of his spirits, not to be outdone by a generous enemy, directed us to serve a round of rum to the English prisoners in durance vile.

"The Englishman again brought out more bottles, which, by the way, were not drugged, and thus everybody fraternized with every body else, and all went merry as a marriage bell.

"'Let things take their course, Tom,' said Dick Archer. 'You and I stand on a sort of neutral ground. We're like the old woman when her old man was fighting with the bear; she didn't care which licked, but wanted to see the fun.'

"By two bells, or one o'clock, the Russian lieutenant was laid out on the cabin transom, oblivious of everything; the two sentries were reclining in a stupor on the booby-hatch, one on each side; their filthy shipmates in the forecastle and about the deck were, for the most part, in a similar happy condition. Clavering had given the signal to his men, and, without striking a blow, the English were in full possession of their own ship.

"Dick and I looked quietly on, like mice in the wall, and saw the whole thing well done.

"The gale had began to moderate at midnight, and before the day broke the Lady Blackwood, under easy sail for scudding' was reeling off seven knots an hour—which was nearly the maximum of her sailing speed—toward milder latitude. The tables had been completely turned, the Russians being confined in the half-deck, while the English sailors mounted guard over them. Dick and I were, for the time being, as good Englishmen as the best of them, it being always our policy to side with the strongest party, and show our loyalty to the existing government.

"But no one can picture the rage and terror of the poor prize-master, when he came to his senses, to find himself confined in a state-room, and learned the true situation of affairs. He saw nought before him but a disgraceful death if he showed his face again in his own country. He was sure to be either shot or hanged for his neglect of duty.

"Clavering did his best to re-assure him, and reconcile him to the varying chances of war; but the poor, crestfallen officer was not to be roused from the melancholy into which he had settled after the first burst of passion was over.

"He was allowed the entire freedom of the ship, and offered all the liquor he might choose to drink; but this could not tempt him. The iron had entered his soul; for to be thus outwitted, and carried a prisoner into an English port was more than he could bear.

"The next night it was nearly calm, and the bark had hardly steerage-way, when it was discovered that she was settling in the water. A plummet dropped into the well showed eight feet of water in the hold, and it was plain to see that any effort at pumping was useless. There was nothing to be done but get out the boats and endeavor to save all the people, amounting in the whole to forty-three souls, before the bark should go down into the ocean depths. The poor, melancholy-mad officer had scuttled her by boring holes in her bottom, determined not only to perish himself, but to involve others in his fate, and destroy, at one blow, all evidence of his disgrace.

"But we had heard a gun fired in answer to our rocket signals of distress, and at daylight saw the assurance of safety in the presence of another whaleship within two miles of us, running down. As she luffed-to, and exposed her broadside to view, Dick and I at once recognized our old home of the Logan.

"As the last of us stepped into the boats, the planksheer now almost level with the sea, the madman, for such he now really was, stepped upon the quarter-rail, and, with a cry that still rings in my ears, leaped into the boiling waves under the ship's counter, and was seen to rise no more. We pushed sadly off from the vortex of the sinking craft, and probably the two lightest hearts among all the number were those of Dick and myself, returning to the shelter of the old ship from which we so foolishly deserted.

"And the sea seemed again to have given up her dead; for there, looking over the Logan's side, quite as much at home as if he had never been away from her, was the grinning face of my dare-devil commander, Joe Fox!"

"There, belay that, Tom!" interrupted two or three voices. "That's piling it too steep. We've believed that two of you were saved, but the third one was rather too much on the marvelous."

"It's true, nevertheless," returned Tom, with the gravity of a judge. "He had a narrower escape than either of us, for he was picked up by his own ship, being found lashed to the loggerhead, and quite insensible, after having been in soak fifteen hours.

"We stood in near the land, at the entrance of Petropaulaska, and set all the Russians afloat in two of the Englishman's boats, so I presume they all landed safely. The corvette was lying off and on at the time, having returned from her cruise; and the captain with the alphabetical name, when he learned the fact, gave chase to us, and used all the arguments in his power to induce us to deliver up Clavering and his crew. But his request was steadily refused, and as they were under the protection of the American flag on the high seas, he was forced to return to port with a flea in his ear, and our passengers remained with us until we arrived at Oahu, in the fall.

"Dick, Joe, and I went to our duty as if nothing had happened, and stuck by the Logan until her voyage was completed. But the old man charged us the value of that whale-boat, and we had to pay for it; for it was deducted out of our lays when the ship arrived home."

NEED AND WISH.

BY LUCY LARCOM.

I NEED not what I cannot have,
The North wind swept from me this folly,—
With lazy, fretful whine to crave
Some comfort against melancholy,
Which haunts us all, when dreams go by
Of what might be, if life were other
Than life is; therefore, every sigh
In working—songs I try to smother.

You need not what you cannot have,
Though torrid gusts of hopeless passion
Amid your fancies moan and rave,
And mould your words to fiery fashion;
What if your mild desire would seize
Some other heart's delight and glory?
Fate reigns not your one will to please—
Not yours the only tragic story.

None needs the thing he cannot have—
The gods know how to give right measure
Though seeming loss our souls to save,
They will not leave us slaves of pleasure.
Yet from his longings who would rest?
To claim, to seek with firm endeavor
Better that still transcends our best—
By this path climbs the soul forever.

BENDED TWIGS AND STRAIGHT SAPLINGS.

BY MARIE OLIVER.

DAISY SAFFORD walked into the sitting-room quietly. She laid her music-roll in its accustomed place, and took off her little straw hat as absent-mindedly as she had put her gloves and parasol in the drawer of the old secretary.

The plainly-furnished sitting-room was very still. Somebody had been in, and with a careful hand had drawn the white lawn curtains closely, so as to shut out the hot sun. A vase of beautiful flowers stood upon the centre-table, while over the mantel sprays of luxuriant ivy fell and clambered about the tiny painting hanging just above it.

But Daisy took no notice of either vase or ivy. As she had put away her walking apparel, she went to the door leading to another apartment and called:—

"Mother!"

A pleasant voice responded at once:—

"Here I am, Daisy; what is it?"

Daisy went into the kitchen hastily. She sat down in the open doorway just where the rays of the sun fell, and looked up into the face of her mother, engaged with the week's ironing, pleadingly and longingly.

"O mother," she broke forth, at last, "I wish I could go away somewhere this summer! All the girls have been talking about going; some to the mountains, and some to the seashore. Oh, dear! if I could only stay a few weeks by the salt water, I would be content."

"I wish you could, Daisy." The mother's face grew very tender as she looked on this one daughter. "It would delight my heart to have you go somewhere. It would do you a great deal of good, besides making you enjoy yourself; but I don't see how we are going to send you. You know it costs a great deal for board at such places, and we have already paid out quite an amount for your music lessons; though, to be sure, you have well improved your time. But perhaps things will be different some time, darling; then you shall have those wishes gratified. I only wish you could now."

"Oh, well mother!" Daisy jumped up from the doorstep quickly, and flung her arms around the gentle woman's neck. "Don't fret about me. Perhaps it is wrong in me to think of such things."

"No, not wrong." The mother's hand smoothed the flushed face lying on her shoulder very softly. "No, not wrong; for you have not seen many shadows in life as yet. You are young, Daisy, and the fancies of youth are different from those of older people. If there were no aspirations, how few things would be accomplished! It is only wrong when we make ourselves miserable over them because they are not."

"I know that, mother; and I ought not to make myself uneasy about them; but really, sometimes when I hear the girls at school talking about this thing and that thing, it makes me wish I had it, too; and I don't see how I am to get them. I know I could appreciate the beautiful. The other day Alice Ford asked me into her house, and the servant showed me into her private sitting-room; and really, our parlor looks shabby beside it. The carpet is very fine, the piano elegant; and when I saw all the rare things, I wished—but there! of what use is it to wish? None at all." And Daisy paused very suddenly.

Mrs. Safford went on with her work quietly.

"Do you think that Alice is any happier than you, Daisy?" she questioned.

"No!" Daisy spoke very eagerly now. "She hasn't any father, or any brother. Her sister is very cold-hearted, and her mother fault-finding. Oh, no! I don't believe she is as happy as I am."

Mrs. Safford exchanged her cold iron for a warmer one.

"Would you like to exchange places with Alice, Daisy?—she take your home, and you take hers?"

"No, I don't think I should," answered Daisy, hugging the big Maltese cat, then slyly basking in the sunlight which streamed across the floor. "I don't think I could give up my dear mamma for Alice's—and yet I should like the beautiful things which she has."

"I'll tell you what 'tis, Daisy," shouted a boyish voice in the yard just underneath the window by which the green hopvine grew,

"you must get married, and then you'll have them."

The young girl glanced in the direction from whence the voice came, with a saucy shake of her head, while the dimples in her cheeks played bopeep with those about her mouth. Then she laughed aloud merrily.

"Oh, dear, Wallace! that is your remedy for everything," she cried. "You are always advising me to get married. One would think you were impatient to get rid of me, you naughty boy."

"But that's the only way you'll ever get your beautiful things," stoutly asserted Wallace; "for you well know that father can't afford such finery as Alice Ford has in her house."

Daisy dropped her pet kitten suddenly and stood up, a strange womanly glow upon her young face.

"I am very foolish," she said, the color in her cheek mounting higher. "One would think me a child, instead of a seventeen year old woman. No, no, Wallace! Don't look so frightened; you meant nothing, my boy; only pray don't ever again speak of my getting married, for I could not bear that. I love you all too well to ever think of leaving you. Besides, how could you ever get along without Daisy?"

"We couldn't do without her, anyway," said another voice; and Walter, the eldest son, entered just at that moment, with his arms full of hard wood for the blazing fire heating the huge irons. "No, no, Wallace! Don't you ever let me hear you speak of Daisy's going off, for when she goes, all our sunshine will go from us."

"And there will be no one then to mend my mittens, or hunt up my cap when lost, or play nurse for me when I am sick!" shouted the roguish Wallace; and off he rushed into the hayfields once more after his manly brother.

Daisy looked toward her mother with a meaning smile.

"How very poetical Walter is, and how matter-of-fact is Wallace!" she said, after a pause. "The former thinks of lost sunshine, the latter of losing his helpmeet; and yet both are good in their way. Do you think all boys are as good as ours, mother?"

Mrs. Safford dropped a kiss on the girlish cheek pressed against her ironing-board.

"No, not at all," she said, hastily; "in fact, but very few. Yet our boys are 'home-boys,' Daisy; they have never been exposed to temptation. But in distant cities I know that there is many a gambler, many a forger, and many a faint-hearted, black-souled murderer. You know but little of the world as yet, Daisy, and you ought to feel grateful that the knowledge of these things has been kept from you."

"Oh, I am, mother! But surely there ought to be some good people in the city; aren't there?"

"Why, certainly; we have many noble men and women, and might have many more, if they would only shun temptation. But, alas! a great many study fashion instead of themselves, and therefore make a blunder. Yet my little girl must grow up into a woman, and not into a butterfly of the world."

Daisy threw both arms about her mother's neck.

"O mother!" she cried, longingly, the tears for the moment rolling over her crimson cheeks, "if I were only sure of having your comfort during all my life, how blest I should be! How shall I ever get along without you!"

The mother's convulsive pressure told more than her lips, as she answered:—

"Daisy! Daisy! is your faith so weak, my child?"

The young girl put up her trembling mouth for a kiss.

"I can seem to stand more when you are with me," she said, softly. "But I never no, never, shall forget one of His promises."

"God bless you, Daisy!" And over that young head the mother breathed a heartfelt prayer for a moment, then quietly putting her from her, she went about her work again, both having been in a measure refreshed by that short conversation.

That night, just while Mrs. Safford was planning with her husband regarding Daisy's wish to spend a few weeks at the seashore, a letter found its way to the farmhouse. It came from the sister of the hard-working woman—came in all the pomp of fashion—to invite Miss Daisy on a sojourn to the grand old watering place of B——.

This proud woman had happened to wed wealthy. Her husband, many years her senior, loaded her with every luxury, and had for some time forbidden her associating with her poorer sister, Mrs. Safford, on the plea that did she do so, she would demean her station of life. So, when the

wealthy Charles Wilberforce bore away as his bride the beautiful Amelia Hastings, her sister cheerfully wedded Farmer Safford, and fancied that all intercourse between the two families had ceased, much to her sorrow.

Things went on in this way until the birth of the two little girls, namely, Daisy Safford, and her Cousin Eva Wilberforce. Then it was a feeling of envy sprang up in the breasts of the two fathers. Mr. Wilberforce, as the years rolled on, showered blessings without number upon his child as her beauty increased, while Mr. Safford toiled early and late for his one daughter.

But owing to the influence of a fashionable, wordly-minded mother, Miss Eva grew into a vain, selfish young lady of seventeen years, while her Cousin Daisy daily matured into what they had ever wished her to be—an earnest woman.

Therefore Mrs. Safford well knew her sister's passion for dress and fashion; so, when the letter came inviting Daisy to accompany Eva in her summer rambles, she hesitated. It was not because she could not afford it; dollars and cents were nothing to her then, for all of Daisy's bills would be settled by her aunt. It was not because the child would miss kindness, for Mrs. Wilberforce was kind in her way. The only objection lay in regard to the many temptations which ever follow the steps of the fashionable.

Eva had many beautiful possessions which Daisy had not, and would not the latter envy the former, despite religious teachings? So the mother reasoned, till finally she came to the conclusion that Daisy should decide for herself; and accordingly, the next day, put the letter into her hands, with a few kind words of advice. Girlish Daisy decided at once. A trip to the seashore was just what she had been wishing for; so with many a glad cry, she ran up-stairs to begin her packing, and to decide how many new dresses she could afford to have.

Motherly Mrs. Safford accepted the bills her husband handed her with a little sigh.

"Father," she said, "I shall not get Daisy an expensive outfit. She will be content, I think, with little. Her own womanly dignity and grace must be her attractions. But I wish Amelia had not invited her, for I fear that being with Eva will have something of an effect upon her. Still, she may have changed during the past years. When a child she was self-willed, but perhaps she is now a graceful modest young girl; though of course she still retains her passion for dress."

"Graceful!" Farmer Safford elevated his nose a trifle higher than it was before, and then suddenly going to his wife's side, he held before her a tiny photograph of Eva, which had been sent with the letter. "See here! do you call this graceful? Look at the hump upon her back! Did nature form that? Look at the simper upon the proud lip! Is life made up of smiles and giggles? No! no! the twig is bent too much. The past years have done a great deal of faulty harm, but with care it would become a great sturdy sapling, after all. It only needs training and patience. I only wish, with all my heart, that she was more like our Daisy."

Mrs. Safford sighed. She was used to her husband's speeches. Rude and abrupt as they were at times, they always possessed sound sense and judgment, hitting the point at once, and letting his neighbors know just the ground whereon he stood.

The likening Miss Eva to a bended twig had often been repeated when alone with his wife. To her it was no new idea; and as she now looked upon the pictured yet soulless face of her only niece, she felt that her husband's comparison was not far out of the way. But she did not offer to venture a remark concerning Eva. She well knew Farmer Safford's opinion of her, and did not wish to enlarge upon the subject; but the good man was not quite ready to relinquish it. He only got up from his chair, and going to a private drawer in the old secretary, he took from thence a small photograph of Daisy, and laid it down upon the table beside the other.

"See there!" he said, holding both so his wife could see without the trouble of rising. "My Daisy has got more gumption in her little finger than Eva has in her whole body; and I am not afraid but what she will come out far ahead of her yet. No matter if Wilberforce does think his child perfect, he may see the day she will be obliged to beg from mine; for Daisy can be a lady, and I trust we shall yet see her an earnest true-hearted woman. Bah! I hate your tiny twigs. They bend too easily to suit me. I want a straight sturdy sappling, strong to endure the blasts of sorrow and the winds of adversity. So take away the picture, wife. I'll keep it, of course, so long as she sent it to me; but I wonder why it is women will deform them-

selves so? If nature had done it for them—if she had hung straggling curls over their eyes, and twisted ornaments in their ears; had bent their feet into a bow, and forced them to carry a hump upon their backs—what a cry they would raise! But so long as it is only the fashion to do these things, it is all right. So they go on; and I say, if women insist upon being fools, instead of what God made them, namely, women, it is none of my business! I can afford to laugh at them; but my girl shall be different."

And having finished his excited speech, Farmer Safford went into the little bed-room leading off the kitchen, and shut the door.

So the days passed on. Daisy's trunks had long been packed, waiting the arrival of her aunt and cousin; and now she found herself, before she could realize it, in the spacious limits of B—— Hotel.

As usual, Mrs. Wilberforce promised herself a gay season. She was naturally of a lively turn of mind, and as her greatest passion was dress and admiration, she was not at a loss for company, or for invitations to certain rounds of pleasure.

Daisy had been asked to accompany her, because, to use her own words, she really pited the poor child. A farmhouse was a terrible place to bury one's self in, and her little niece, when last she saw her, had given promise to great beauty. So in order to please her, she had sent for her.

Then Miss Eva, like her mother, was very gay. She had a large share of good looks, a fact she had known from babyhood; and therefore she never troubled herself to learn anything else. From her cradle she had been clothed in the richest of garments, and had had idle compliments poured into her ears from the many young swells of her day; so it was no wonder that life to her seemed as a pleasure picture, for she had not as yet seen the wrong side.

But though from the depths of her heart Mrs. Wilberforce felt the contrast between her own child and the child of the farmhouse, she would not acknowledge her better feelings, and on the day of their arrival at the hotel, took care to present Daisy to all her friends as the daughter of a very eccentric sister.

Yet there was no need of that, for Daisy, without any effort on her part, attracted her share of attention. Her sweet earnest face and glad young eyes drew more than one glance; while her courteous way of granting or accepting a favor, gained her many friends.

Yet Mrs. Wilberforce was not contented with this only, for she had a plan in view; in fact, she had taken that summer trip for the purpose of making a conquest for her daughter, and if possible, for Daisy, as well. Both girls were old enough to be married, and of course, being only children they must marry well. Mrs. Wilberforce was a person of great determination; so when she met the two friends Kirkland Vane and Harry Prince at the spacious hotel, she at once improved her opportunities, and soon had the satisfaction of seeing the four young people conversing like old acquaintances.

Toward Eva, Harry Prince preserved a warm affection. The gay butterfly was very tempting to the man of the world; while on the other hand, the womanly nature of Daisy won for her the respect and admiration of Kirkland Vane.

Then Mrs. Wilberforce was almost sorry she had introduced her niece, for the latter gentleman was most decidedly the best catch of the two, and she had rather have had Eva claim his attention, he was so perfect and noble.

This she whispered to her daughter one evening, as they were preparing for a stroll on the beach by the light of the moon; and accordingly the obedient young lady brought all her blandishments to bear upon Vane. Her dress of heavy crimson silk she made to trail more gracefully over the white sands; the golden curls fell still lower on the white shoulders gleaming beneath the carelessly arranged folds of her shawl; and she was exceedingly afraid of venturing too near the swiftly inrolling breakers, lest she might spoil the pretty boots encasing the pretty feet.

Poor Daisy watched her like one bewildered. Her own dress was thick and waterproof. She wore a thick sack and heavy boots, neatly fitting. She was afraid neither of the waves nor the spray, for she required no curl-papers to keep in check the soft brown hair waving about neck and shoulders. Therefore she looked on curiously; and when a tiny shriek of fear from her cousin's lips brought both gentlemen at once to her side, she could take care of herself; and so went on quietly, wondering why it was that Eva allowed both to support her, when it was such splendid walking.

At a little ways from the hotel, however,

they sat down to rest and to watch the play of the waves upon the shore. Eva leaned against a slender birch tree branching out from the rock on which she was sitting; and finally shivered, and drew her shawl close about her, as if afraid of the dampness.

"Ugh!" she said, "I wonder how the proprietors of the hotel can allow this miserable old stump of a tree to stand. It just spoils the view from those upper windows; and yet I am told that if trained, it could be made quite an addition to the beach. But it is cragged enough now," she added, drawing further away from it.

"It is its neglect which makes it unlovely," replied Kirkland Vane, laying his hand beside Daisy's, as it rested in its purity upon the despised tree. "A little care, however, might, old as it is, make it a straight sapling like its mate over yonder."

"And that is so beautiful!" cried Daisy, the moonbeams playing bopeep in the little dimples hovering about her sweet mouth. "But, Eva dear, you seem chilly; you are shivering. Hadn't we better return to the hotel?"

"Oh, no! pray don't on my account," cried Eva, as the others arose; "I do very well. Besides, the night is lovely."

But Daisy, seeing her lips tremble, insisted, and so they followed her advice; while as the two girls bade them good-night in the lower hall, and like warm living sunbeams vanished up the winding stairs to their room, Kirkland Vane felt better and purer for that half hour spent in the society of Daisy Safford.

"By Jove, Kirk!" cried the impulsive Harry, as the two entered their own apartment, next to the one occupied by Daisy and Eva; "what a difference there is between Miss Wilberforce and her cousin, Miss Safford. I never would have believed that two of a family would be so unlike."

Kirkland Vane turned from the pages of the book he had taken up on their entrance, and looked up at his friend, a proud enthusiasm lighting up his noble features.

"You've spoken the truth, Hal," he said. "And now, between you and me, I feel quite rested since my short acquaintance with Miss Safford. It is quite refreshing to meet with a true woman once in a while, after playing the agreeable to so many uselessly-gotten-up belles of the present century."

"Refreshing!" cried Harry, starting from his chair in astonishment. "Kirk Vane, what a fellow you are! Now what you see in that country girl is more than I can tell. Why, she isn't to be compared to Miss Wilberforce! She dresses elegantly. Why, her costume to-night must have cost a small fortune. Did you notice it, old fellow?"

"No," replied Kirkland Vane, now speaking quite plainly, as his companion's meaning flashed across his mind. "No, I did not notice it. But, Hal, to tell you the truth, these two cousins remind me quite forcibly of those two trees we were conversing about this evening. Miss Eva is the bended twig; made so, perhaps, through the influence of a worldly-minded mother. Her intellect is warped, and all her finer qualities smothered; though with careful training in childhood, she might have become a perfect young lady. On the other hand, Miss Safford has had judicious management, which has made her just what she is. A free life in the country has brightened her intellect, and stored her mind with useful knowledge. She is retiring, yet not prudish; she is reserved, yet friendly; and I can say my life has been made happier and purer by her friendship."

And with that remark, Kirkland Vane resumed his book, while Harry, after idly selecting a cigar, went out upon the balcony to enjoy it alone, highly incensed at what he termed his friend's foolishness.

Meanwhile, in the adjoining chamber, occupied by Eva and Daisy, an exciting conversation was being carried on, and the loud voices were distinctly heard by Kirkland Vane, without any effort on his part; therefore he laid down his book, and fell to dreaming, eager to hear, and yet despising himself for the part he was acting.

Mrs. Wilberforce had visited her daughter before retiring, and on finding the rich dress worn by her on the beach that evening ruined by the damp sands and wet spray, had given vent to her indignation in tones which could not be understood.

"It is a perfect shame for you to do so, Eva Wilberforce!" she cried, excitedly. "I can't afford to replace such garments fresh every evening during our stay. You have already ruined several, and now this beautiful dress isn't fit to be seen. You must put it in your trunk, and we will give it to Nora when we get home. Careless girl! I wish you were well off my hands! You've thrown away all your chances, and now bid fair to let these two good matches slip

through your fingers, without striving to secure either one or the other. You really must try, Eva! You are old enough, and Kirkland Vane is a man any woman might well be proud of. Why don't you encourage him, child?"

"I would, mamma," returned Eva, coolly, as she replaced a loose curl-paper, "only I think he fancies Daisy instead of me; and you see I don't wish to interfere."

Mrs. Wilberforce looked astounded.

"Daisy Safford," she cried, "is this the way you return all my kindness? Recollect my daughter is the eldest, and therefore must have the first chance in society. Besides, Kirkland Vane must think your conduct very unlady-like, if you have forced yourself upon his notice," she added, coldly.

Daisy lifted her head from the pillows, where she had been lying watching Eva, and the red flush settled all over her cheek and forehead.

"Auntie! Aunt Millie! I have never in any way tried to attract the attention of either gentleman; please believe me!" she cried, piteously. "I do, however, respect both; yet neither is in my estimation perfect. Mr. Prince is fond of company and of pleasure; but he is passionate and unprincipled. Kirkland Vane is also gentlemanly and tender, but he is proud of his handsome form, and of his mellow voice. And now, Aunt Amelia, if I have stood in Eva's way, I am very sorry; but I did so unknowingly; and I have no desire to be other than what I am—a woman, tender and true."

Then Daisy faltered. Mrs. Wilberforce left the room angrily. Eva went on with the task of curling her hair as if nothing had happened, occasionally comforting Daisy, who lay sobbing among the pillows; and in the next room Kirkland Vane was biting his lips as he recalled Daisy's judgment concerning his pride of form and voice.

After that he went out to find Harry, and told him the whole story; but that young man was blinded to the faults of Eva Wilberforce. He saw naught but her virtues; and taking it for granted that if he wedded her he should step at once into ease and plenty, he proposed, was accepted, the time for the marriage set, and in two days after Mrs. Wilberforce and her party returned homewards.

Kirkland Vane took Daisy's honest hand in his to say good-by.

"Miss Safford," he said, "you have helped to make me a better man. I shall call upon you sometime. Tell me if I shall be welcome?"

"My friends are always welcome," was the unflinching reply; and Daisy went back to the farmhouse.

The following winter Eva wedded in grand style; and after the display was over, Kirkland Vane surprised them all by visiting the farmhouse often. Walter and he became firm friends. To Mr. Safford he was ever respectful. So when at last he asked for Daisy, the good farmer gave her up proudly.

"You come of good stock," he said, kindly. "My Daisy is a dear child. She has ever been a dear daughter to me, and she will make you a good wife. Take her, my boy, and deal by her as a priceless woman should be dealt by."

Thus it was Daisy Safford left the farmhouse. She went to a spacious home of her own, filled with the beautiful things she had often longed for; and there she held her fair head up proudly, ever the firm friend of all who trusted in her.

Eva also maintained her way for a while, but owing to repeated extravagances her husband failed; Mr. Wilberforce refused to harbor an idle man, and so the proud couple made their way in the world with the cheerfully given aid of Daisy and her husband; while Eva, remembering the rock on which her own and her mother's bark had gone down, ever afterwards taught the little ones committed to her care to grow into straight saplings, and beware of bended twigs.

STUDY thyself; what rank, or what degree,
Thy wise Creator has ordained for thee.—DRYDEN.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

THE FIRST CROSSING OF GREENLAND.

THE character of the interior of Greenland has long had a special interest for geologists from its bearings on the theory of glacial action, which appears to have so potent an agent in the moulding of the earth's surface. Nordenskïold in 1870, and again in 1883, penetrated some distance into the interior on the "Inland Ice," but in common with others, still adhered to the view that Greenland is not wholly ice-covered. It was to settle this point that Nansen undertook his expedition of 1888. ("The First Crossing of Greenland," by Fridtjof Nansen; translated from the Norwegian by H. M. Gepp.)

It is impossible to read Nansen's bright narrative without becoming convinced that love of adventure supplied an impulse without which the desire to solve a point mainly interesting to geologists would scarcely have induced the young student of zoology to leave his own studies and incur the hardships and dangers of so arduous an undertaking. Nansen was well known in his own country, as a proficient in the national pastime of "skilöbning"—the art of traversing snow and ice on the long wooden runners known as "ski." The success which attended the use of "ski" in Nordenskïold's attempt on the Inland Ice in 1883, convinced Nansen that it would be possible for a party of strong and skillful "skilöbers" to cross the Inland Ice on their "ski"; each man dragging a light sledge containing the necessary supplies. Funds for the expedition having been obtained, largely through private generosity, Nansen found no difficulty in procuring the co-operation of kindred spirits, imbued with something of the old viking love of adventure, and all, like himself, proficient in the use of "ski." It was thought well to procure the assistance of Laplanders on account of their hardihood and power of enduring cold. The two Laps who completed the party of six undertook the work purely as a matter of business. They proved to be the least useful members of the expedition.

Dr. Nansen gives due prominence in his book to the description of the outfit. "The expedition," he says, "owed its origin entirely to the Norwegian sport of 'skilöbning.'" A whole chapter is devoted to this subject, and is among the most instructive in the book. A map is given showing the enormous extent of country in Northern Europe and Asia in which "ski" are employed. A zoologist feels bound to apply the doctrine of evolution to every problem," and it is ingeniously argued that the primitive method of facilitating progression over snow by means of a wooden board strapped to the foot is susceptible of development in two ways. The first is by making the board long and narrow, the final result being the Norwegian "ski." The second method is that of substituting for the board a framework with a network of sinews stretched across, the highest development of this form being the Indian snow-shoe. This latter form is more suitable where the snow is very soft; and the snow-shoes with which the expedition was furnished were, in fact, occasionally, though not often, used in place of the "ski."

Nansen determined to start from the east coast, a method opposed to the traditions of Arctic exploration. One advantage is apparent—namely, that if a start were made from the west, the route must ultimately be retraced. On the other hand, former attempts to effect a landing on the east coast had failed owing to the fact that the cold polar current brings down a barrier of ice which renders access to the coast almost impossible even in summer. On July 17, 1888, the little expedition in their two boats put off from the "Jason" in latitude sixty-five and a half degrees north, confidently expecting to make their way through the floe-ice direct to the shore. This, however, was not to be. The floes jammed; they were compelled to haul their boats up on the ice; and a rapid current carried them southwards; while the parting of the ice and the encroachment of the sea rendered their situation perilous in the extreme. After ten days of terrible anxiety, a fortunate change of conditions brought them close to shore, and a landing was at length effected, but two hundred and forty miles south of the point at which they had aimed. The next fortnight was occupied in working north-

wards close under the shore, a time of less peril but of strenuous exertion. An interesting account is given of the meeting with a camp of the heathen Eskimos of the east coast. The Arctic traveler has one advantage over explorers in most parts of the globe—the natives are uniformly friendly. "A smiling face," says Nansen, "is the Eskimo's greeting to a stranger."

On August 15, being now in latitude sixty-four and a half degrees, it was determined to begin the work of crossing. The boats were abandoned, and the ascent of the eastern slope of the Inland Ice was begun. The ice was intersected by numerous crevasses running generally at right angles to the direction of ascent. The work was exhausting and the danger great, yet no serious accident occurred. "It was singular," the author remarks, "that none of us ever fell through a crevasse further than the armpits." After some days' climbing, the gradient became less steep, and the party found themselves on safer ground. Three days of incessant rain now obliged them to remain idle in their tent. The rest would have been more welcome had not the inexorable leader kept the party on short rations when work was not exacted. The Laps, who thought the outlook very bad, devoutly read their Testament. The Norwegian gentlemen in their sleeping-bag studied the "Nautical Almanac."

The rain having at length ceased, the march was resumed; but by August 26th—altitude six thousand feet—it was apparent that the slowness of their progress hitherto had rendered it impossible to reach Christianshaab before the departure of the last ship for Europe. The course was accordingly altered for the more southerly settlement of Gothaab. Availing themselves of a favorable wind, more rapid progress was made tying the sledges two abreast and sailing. On the 29th of August the wind dropped, and the work of hauling was resumed. On the 31st, land was seen for the last time, from this point the country being completely covered with snow. The character of the coasts of Greenland indicates that the country is as mountainous as Norway. So vast is the accumulation of snow, that, as Nansen has now shown, the valleys are filled by it, and the mountains are buried beneath its smooth surface. For many days the journey was over a horizontal plateau. The progress made was only five to ten miles a day, owing to the difficult nature of the snow. The cold, too, was intense at this altitude of from eight to nearly ten thousand feet—greater, indeed, than has been registered at this time of year in any other part of the globe.

The monotony of this part of the journey seems to have told somewhat on the spirits of the expedition. At this point only does Nansen's story lose something of its singular cheerfulness and elasticity of style. The solution of the problem they had come so far to solve was before their eyes, but "food," he says, "was the axis on which our whole life turned, our ideal of enjoyment was—enough to eat." The ideal was far from being attained on an allowance of one kilo (two and one-fifth pounds) per diem in such an atmosphere and with unremitting toil. By September 11 a fall of the ground was just perceptible; on September 17, just two months after leaving the "Jason," a snow-bunting was seen, the harbinger of land. The 19th was the most exciting day of the whole journey. The ground was now sloping decidedly to the west; and a strong easterly gale springing up, the sledges were lashed together, as on a former occasion, and sails hoisted. The violence of the wind rendered the sledges unmanageable, till a device for steering was contrived. A pole was fastened between the sledges, projecting in front, and this was grasped by the steerer, who determined the course of the sledge by the direction in which he turned his "ski." The pace was terrific, and the danger correspondingly great; but the practised "skilöbers" were equal to their task. No accident happened, and the spirits of the party rose with the exhilaration of rapid motion. Towards evening, land was seen in the distance. The descent became steeper; the ice-slope of the western side had been reached; and a sudden exertion of strength and skill by the steersman alone prevented the foremost sledge from falling down a broad crevasse.

More cautious progress was now necessary; but the journey was continued by moonlight till, finding themselves among a perfect network of crevasses, a halt was at length called after a run of more than five-and-thirty miles. That night, Nansen and Sverdrup forgot to wind up their watches, a remissness not hard to understand after the strain of such a day. Captain Dietrichson, however, in whose punctual performance of every duty Nansen sees the influence of military

training, was not remiss; so that the determinations of longitude were fortunately not thrown out. During four more days the dangers of the western ice-slope were encountered, till, on September 24, their feet once more felt the springy earth, and the Inland Ice was crossed. The distance from the starting point was about two hundred and fifty miles as the crow flies. They struck the head of a fiord, the opening of which is a little to the south of Gothaab. In the course of a few days a frail boat was constructed from the tent, and some willow boughs cut from a thicket. On September 28, Nansen and Sverdrup—the sailor of the party—embarked, leaving the rest behind in camp with a not too abundant supply of provisions. Gothaab was reached on October 3; and shortly afterwards the other members of the expedition were brought to the settlement in boats.

Thus was accomplished the first crossing of Greenland, a great feat, the performance of which cost neither life nor limb. No disagreement marred the life of the comrades, the narrative affording in this respect a refreshing contrast to much of the recent literature of travel. As an author, Nansen is as successful as in his other undertakings. His style is vigorous and buoyant; and the diligence with which he used pencil and camera has enriched two volumes with illustrations, many of which have considerable artistic merit. The translator's work, too, has been thoroughly well done.

Nansen goes north again in 1892. All will wish him success in his second venture.

A FLASH IN THE PAN.

IT IS not everybody who knows what a minor canon is, or what his duties are; so, for the sake of the uninformed, let me say at once that his chief duty is to take his turn in reading, that is, in monotoning and singing the daily services in a cathedral. Such is my duty. I am a minor canon of the cathedral Church of Marchbury. I occupy a house within the cathedral close, and thus enjoy the privilege of passing my days "far from the maddening crowd." The life is uneventful enough, little happens from year's end to year's end to vary the humdrum of existence; in fact, nothing more exciting than a garden party at the bishop's or a dinner at the deanery, or tea at the archdeacon's. Even these superior "functions" cause but a slight and transient ruffle upon the calm flow of life's stream.

For many years, as a minor canon, I have breathed this serene and placid atmosphere of the close. Often have I wondered if I should live all my life thus; or whether, some day or other, something would startle me, like a bolt from the blue sky, and I should find myself plunged, on a sudden, into the midst of the most exciting events. For many years, year after year, and month after month, I have regularly taken my "turn" in singing the services, and nothing particularly remarkable has ever happened to me—until yesterday; and yesterday something did happen.

It was Monday, and in the afternoon, as I was walking along the High street of Marchbury, I was met by a distinguished looking person, whom I had observed at the services in the cathedral on the previous day. Now it chanced, on that Sunday, that I was singing the service. Properly speaking, it was not my turn; but, as my brother minor canons were either away from Marchbury, or ill in bed, I was the only one left to perform the necessary duty. The distinguished looking person was a tall, big man, with a round fat face and small features. His eyes, his hair and mustache (his face was bare but for a small mustache) were quite black, and he had a very pleasant and genial expression. He wore a tall hat, set rather jauntily on his head, and he was dressed with a long frock coat, buttoned across the chest, and fitting him close to the body. As he came with a half saunter, half swagger, along the street, I knew him again at once by his appearance, and, as he came nearer, I saw from his manner that he was intending to stop and speak to me. For he slightly raised his hat, and, in a soft, melodious voice, with a colonial "twang," which was far from being disagreeable, and which, indeed, to my ear gave a certain additional interest to

his remarks, he saluted me with "Good-day, sir!"

"Good-day," I answered, with just a little reserve in my tone.

"I hope, sir," he began, "you will excuse my stopping you on the street, but I wish to tell you how much I enjoyed the music at your Cathedral yesterday. I am an Australian, sir, and we have no such music in my country."

"I suppose not," I said.

"No, sir," he went on, "nothing nearly so fine. I am very fond of music, and, as my business brought me in this direction, I thought I would stop at your city and take the opportunity of paying a visit to your grand Cathedral. And I am delighted I came; so pleased, indeed, that I should like to leave some memorial of my visit behind me. I should like, sir, to do something for your choir."

"I am sure it is very kind of you," I replied.

"Yes, I should certainly be glad if you could suggest to me something I might do in this way. As regards money, I may say that I have plenty of it. I am the owner of a most valuable property. My business relations extend throughout the world, and if I am as fortunate in the projects of the future as I have been in the past, I shall probably one day achieve the proud position of being the richest man in the world."

I did not like to undertake, myself, the responsibility of advising or suggesting, so I simply said:—

"I cannot venture to say, off-hand, what would be the most acceptable way of showing your great kindness and generosity; but I should certainly recommend you to put yourself in communication with the dean."

"Thank you, sir," said my Australian friend, "I will do so. And now, sir," he continued, "let me say how much I admire your voice. It is, without exception, the very finest and clearest I have ever heard."

"Really," I answered, quite overcome with such unqualified praise, "really it is good of you to say so."

"Ah! but I feel it, my dear sir. I have been round the word; from Sydney to 'Frisco, across the continent of America (he called it Amerker) to New York city; then on to England; and to-morrow I shall leave your city to continue my travels. But in all my experience I have never heard so grand a voice as your own."

This and a great deal more he said in the same strain, which modesty forbids me to reproduce.

Now, I am not without some knowledge of the world outside the close of Marchbury Cathedral, and I could not listen to such a "flattering tale" without having my suspicions aroused. Who and what is this man? thought I. I looked at him narrowly. At first the thought flashed across me that he might be a "swell mobsman." But no; his face was too good for that; besides, no man with that huge frame, that personality so marked and so easily recognizable, could be a swindler; he could not escape detection a single hour. I dismissed the ungenerous thought. Perhaps he is rich, as he says. We do hear of munificent donations by benevolent millionaires now and then. What if this Australian, attracted by the glories of the old cathedral, should now appear, as a *deus ex machina*, to re-endow the choir, or to found a musical professoriate in connection with the choir, appointing me the first occupant of the professorial chair?

These thoughts flashed across my mind in the momentary pauses of his fluent tongue.

"As for yourself, sir," he began again, "I have something to propose, which I trust may not prove unwelcome. But the public street is hardly a suitable place to discuss my proposal. May I call upon you this evening at your house in the close? I know which it is, for I happened to see you go into it yesterday after the morning service."

"I shall be very pleased to see you," I replied. "We are going out to dinner this evening; but I shall be at home and disengaged till about seven."

"Thank you very much. Then I shall do myself the pleasure of calling upon you about six o'clock. Till then, farewell!" A graceful wave of the hand, and my unknown friend had disappeared round the corner of the street.

Now at last, I thought, something is going to happen in my uneventful life—something to break the monotony of existence. Coming events cast their shadows before. The shadow had been cast, and a very solid and substantial shadow, too—over six feet high, and proportionately broad and thick. I had succeeded, it was evident, in attracting the notice of some great Australian millionaire. Of course, he must have inquired my name; he could get that from any of the cathedral vergers; and, as he said, he had observed

whereabouts in the close I lived. But I was not to see him again till six o'clock, and there were three good hours to wait. I recalled all that happened on the Sunday. It seemed as if some special Providence were acting in my favor. It was due to the illness and absence of my colleagues that I had had the good fortune to officiate. Surely this was providential, and I am ashamed to say that I was, in one way, realizing the truth of the famous maxim of La Rochefoucauld, in deriving a secret satisfaction from the misfortunes of my friends. Still, it was remarkable that it should happen thus. And it was undoubtedly true that on that particular Sunday I was in excellent voice; and then the vanity, which is natural to all men, asserted itself in me, and I found myself only too ready to believe that my voice was the "finest and clearest" ever heard. Somebody's must be the finest, and why not mine? My mysterious friend, whatever else he might be, was most certainly a man of good taste and judgment; that could not be denied. And then, as he said, he was rich. "Plenty of money," he said he had. What is he coming to see me for? I wondered. I spent the rest of the afternoon in making the wildest surmises. I was castle-building in Spain at a furious rate. At one time I imagined that this faithful son of the church —as he appeared to me—was going to build and endow a grand cathedral in Australia, on condition that I should be appointed dean at a yearly stipend of—say £10,000. At another time I imagined him asking me to become his private chaplain at about the same remuneration. Again I thought he might offer to educate my three boys at his own expense, provided that special attention should be given to the development of their natural musical genius. Or, perhaps, I said to myself, he will beg me to accept a sum of money—I never thought of it as less than a thousand pounds—as a slight recognition of and tribute to my remarkable vocal ability. I confess I always came back to this last conjecture as the most probable; the others seemed rather wild in their fancifulness. I felt there were many practical objections in the way of realizing these, but it seemed so easy and natural that he should make me a present from his boundless wealth that my imagination dwelt upon it with increasing satisfaction.

Punctually as the cathedral clock struck six there was a ring at the visitors' bell; in a moment or two my unknown friend was shown into the drawing-room, which he entered with the easy air of a man of the world. I noticed he was carrying a small black bag.

"How do you do again, Mr. Dale?" he said, as though we were old acquaintances. "You see I have come sharp to my time."

"Yes," I answered, "and I am pleased to see you; do sit down." He sank into my best armchair, and placed his bag on the floor beside him.

"Since we met in the afternoon," he said, "I have written a letter to your dean, expressing the great pleasure I felt in listening to your choir; and at the same time I enclosed a £5 note, which I begged him to divide among the choir boys and men, from Alexander Poulter, Esq., of Poulter's Pills. You have, of course, heard of the world-renowned Poulter's Pills. I am Poulter."

Poulter of Poulter's Pills! My heart sank within me. A five-pound note! My airy castles were tottering.

"I also sent him a couple of hundred of my pamphlets, which I said I trusted he would be so kind as to distribute in the Close."

I was aghast!

"And now, with regard to the special object of my call, Mr. Dale. If you will allow me to say so, you are not making the most of that grand voice of yours; you are hidden under an ecclesiastical bushel here—lost to the world. You are wasting your vocal strength and sweetness on the desert air, so to speak. Why,—if I may hazard a guess, —I don't suppose you make five hundred a year here, at the outside?"

I could say nothing.

"Well, now, I can put you into the way of making at least three or four times as much as that. Listen. I am Alexander Poulter of Poulter's Pills. I have a proposal to make to you; the scheme is bound to succeed, but I want your help. Accept my proposal and your fortune's made. Did you ever hear Moody and Sankey?" he asked abruptly.

It seemed an eccentric query, and in its jerky disjointedness reminded me of Alice in Wonderland. I murmured that I had had that advantage.

"So much the better," he said, with evident satisfaction, and he lifted his bag on to his knees.

I was beginning to get rather nervous. What if this man before me were an escaped

lunatic? What if he carried some deadly weapon in that bag? At any rate, I would be very careful not to contradict him, but agree with him in everything.

"So much the better," he repeated; "it will save me some risk of not making myself understood. You are now in a position to grasp my scheme. Moody and Sankey were, I believe, eminently successful in their line, and it seems to me not unreasonable to expect that a similar success will result from applying the same method in my business. We must advertise. Famous as Poulter's Pills are, their fame depends upon keeping up a system of enterprising advertisement. We have tried for a time, as an experiment, the effect of not advertising; but we found out the mistake. Advertise we must."

The man is an idiot, thought I; he is now fairly carried away with his particular mania. Will it last long? Shall I ring?

"Novelty, my dear sir," he went on, "is the rule of the day; and there must be novelty in advertising as in everything else, to catch the public interest. So I intend to go on a tour, lecturing on the merits of Poulter's Pills, in all the principal halls of all the principal towns all over the world. But I have been delayed in carrying out my idea till I could associate myself with a gentleman such as yourself. Will you join me? I should be the Moody of the tour; you would be its Sankey. I would speak my patter and you would intersperse my orations with melodious ballads bearing upon the virtues of Poulter's Pills. The ballads are all ready."

So saying, he opened that bag, and drew forth from its recesses nothing more alarming than a thick roll of manuscript music.

"The verses are my own," he said, with a little touch of pride; "and as for the music, I thought it better to make use of popular melodies, so as to enable the audience to join in the chorus. See, here is one of the ballads: 'Darling, I am better now.' It describes the woes of a fond lover, or, rather, his physical ailments, until he went through a course of Poulter. Here's another: 'I'm ninety-five! I'm ninety-five!' You catch the drift of that, of course—a healthy old age secured by taking Poulter's Pills. Ah! what's this? 'Little sister's last request.' I fancy the idea of that is to beg the family never to be without Poulter's Pills. Here again: 'Then you'll remember me.' I'm afraid that title is not original; never mind, the song is. And here is—but there are many more, and I won't detain you with them now."

He saw, perhaps, that I was getting impatient. Thank heaven, however, he was no escaped lunatic! I was safe!

"Well, now, my dear Mr. Dale, you see what my plan is. What do you say? Don't reject it because it appears ridiculous or extravagant—it is just what is ridiculous and extravagant which succeeds in advertising. And, my word for it, there's money in it, sir. I don't ask you to invest in the concern; I don't ask you to give security for any sum of money, if you join me; what I want you to do is simply to help me with your melodious voice in the way I have explained. I can offer you thirty pounds a week to begin with, and then, if my project succeeds—as I am sure it will—you shall have forty pounds. We shall travel all over the country with a four-in-hand, with a brass band playing on the top, while you and I will be in front on the box. Imagine what a stir we shall make everywhere! Picture the huge crowds which will flock to our lectures! Come, what do you say?"

I could say nothing. Disappointment and disgust, rage and resentment, distracted my mind. This was the end of all my brilliant hopes! I saw myself in imagination being driven about the streets of provincial towns in the day, and sitting behind a harmonium singing abominable ballads to its lugubrious accompaniments at night. The thought was too much for me. By a great effort I managed to stammer a few words.

"Mr. Poulter," said I, "I took you this afternoon for a disinterested and philanthropic millionaire; you take me for—for something different from what I am. We have both made mistakes. In a word, it is impossible for me to accept your offer."

"Is that final?" asked Poulter.

"Certainly," said I.

Poulter gathered his manuscripts together and replaced them in the bag, and got up to leave the room.

"Good-evening, Mr. Dale," he said mournfully, as I opened the door of the room. "Good-evening"—he kept on talking till he was fairly out of the house; "mark my words, you'll be sorry, very sorry, one day that you did not fall in with my scheme. Offers like mine don't come every day, and you will one day regret having refused it."

I had little appetite for my dinner that evening.

N'IMPORTE.

BY BLANCHE SHAW.

"AND this phenomenon of beauty and grace will arrive to-morrow. I hope you will enjoy her visit, Esther."

"I am sure of it, Ralph, for at school Madeline was my dearest friend; and since then she has won from society the fame of being a very charming woman. I hope you will like her."

"I regret it, but I fear your hopes will not be realized. You know from the first, Esther, that I have exhibited no enthusiasm in regard to this visit, and as the event draws nearer it doesn't seem a bit more agreeable."

"Why, Ralph?"

"No, it doesn't! To tell the truth, it is a confounded bore!"

Having delivered himself of those decided sentiments, Mr. Ralph McLeod walked to the window, and plunging his hands deep into his pockets, studied the honeysuckle attentively.

Esther went on sewing rapidly for a moment or two, and then said in a low voice:—

"I am sorry that you are so prejudiced against Madeline, Ralph. Had I supected your feelings, I would not have invited her."

"No, no," interrupted he. "I wouldn't deprive you of the pleasure of her visit for the world. I'm of no importance."

Esther's cheek blushed.

"That is unkind, Ralph. You know very well that anything disagreeable to you cannot be pleasant to me. I assure you that when I invited Madeline I thought of your pleasure as much as my own. She is a very brilliant girl; and I am sure that after you have seen her you will repent of all the unkind things you have said, and like her as well as I do."

"Kind fate forbid! I have no ambition to be a maniac, even on so superior a subject. To-morrow morning I shall start for Uncle James's. The fishing and hunting are good there; and I guess I will be able to make life endurable till the departure of the siren."

"Ralph, you don't mean it! You would not be so unkind!"

"Indeed, I do mean it; and as for the kindness of it, I think I deserve credit for my magnanimity. If I stayed here I might possibly win some of your darling's smiles from you; but going, I leave you without a rival. Of course you won't miss me."

Esther did not answer this. She was struggling so hard to keep back her tears, that she dared not trust her voice. Ralph cast a quick glance behind him, and saw the mischief that he had done. His heart smote him; but he was a man on his dignity, and he could not step down all at once, just because a girl was a little pouty. He looked at the honeysuckles harder, and even tried to whistle, but it was a miserable attempt. The notes died on his lips in a tortured squeal, as if ashamed of themselves, as they ought to have been. He looked at Esther again. This time he saw tears glistening on her lashes. None but a brute could stand that unmoved, and Ralph wasn't quite a brute. He went to her side, and said in a coaxing tone:—

"Come, Essie, don't feel so badly. I was a wretch to say what I did; but it is confoundedly provoking to have an empty-headed flirt come in and spoil our summer for us."

"She is not empty headed, Ralph," replied Esther, loyal to her friend through all; "and she'll make our summer pleasanter."

A retort sprang to Ralph's lips, but the eyes raised to his were still shining through tears, and he swallowed it.

"Never mind, Esther, we won't discuss that now. I'm sorry I hurt your feelings. Those tears are worth more than all the Madelines in the world. Forgive me. I do not need any one to make either summer or winter bright where you are."

What woman's heart could stand such an appeal? Not Esther's. She wiped away her tears, but clung to her project.

"Never mind, Ralph. I'll forget all about it; but you must call to-morrow evening and see Madeline."

Ralph made a wry face, but he gave the desired promise, and soon Esther stood in the window, watching his tall form as it disappeared in the distance.

Ralph and Esther held that relationship called "next neighbor" towards each other. They had been playmates from childhood; and when Esther's little feet first traveled

the path to school, she clung tightly to Ralph's hand, into whose care she had been committed by her mother, with the admonition to take good care of her little girl. And he was faithful to the charge. No big boy dared to tease, or ill-natured girl to slap or otherwise molest her while he was near. Childhood passed, and Ralph became a big college boy. The baby love grew stronger, and many were the quires of note that it consumed to tell how each was missed. At last student days were over, and Ralph returned home "a lawyer of fine promise," who was sure to make his mark in the world, The village belles smiled, and the mammas had a kind word for him; but he saw nothing but Esther. At the time our story opens he had been practising his profession five years, and won all the fame the village had to give; and the gossips had decided that it was time that Esther and he were one. Ralph smiled when the news reached him; and then he thought:—

"It is time. My fame is surely spreading, and independent of that, I have enough to give Esther a home. I guess we had better be married soon."

True, he had never asked her to be his wife, but she knew he intended she should hold that position. She knew he loved her, and he was perfectly satisfied that she loved him. That was enough. He would ask her to be married in the fall. He had intended to say this to her the morning we first met them, but Madeline's expected arrival turned everything into a different channel.

Madeline arrived in due time, and was greeted with the proper ecstasies. Esther had not overrated her beauty, and after she had left her in her room to change her traveling dress, she smiled triumphantly over Ralph's sure defeat.

If Madeline were beautiful in her traveling dress, she was dazzling when she reappeared in pure soft white, with no ornament but a rose in her auburn hair.

Esther was not plain. Her hair was soft brown, and her eyes a deep dark gray; but her complexion, though pure, was pale, which gave her a quiet home air, and made her look like a faded print beside this brilliant-hued fairy. Most girls would have feared to expose a lover to the contrast, but Esther never thought of this. She loved Madeline; she was proud of her beauty; and she wanted Ralph to acknowledge it too.

After supper the family gathered in the parlor; Madeline seated herself where the light fell in a golden shower over her, and displayed her beauty to the best advantage. Esther watched her, and waited impatiently for Ralph. He came at last, and Esther smiled a little provoking smile at his look of unfeigned admiration when presented. But if surprised, he was not defeated. He retired to a corner, and stood by his colors nobly. After the first glance, Madeline apparently paid no attention to him, but prattled away merrily to the others. Ralph fretted under this. He addressed several remarks to her, which were answered politely but concisely, without the least encouragement for further conversation, and at last, in desperation, he surrendered himself to Mr. Merton, to discuss the last political development, till it was time for him to leave. Esther arose to go to the door with him, not quite so elated as she was a short time before. Madeline paused in the midst of an animated conversation with Esther's big brother, to give him a bewildering languid glance under her lashes, and say "good-evening."

"Well, Ralph," asked Esther, when they stood on the piazza, "is she not beautiful?"

"Very," replied he. "And she is perfectly aware of the fact."

"I am sure you'll like her."

"So you've remarked before."

"Don't be cross, Ralph."

"Don't be foolish, Esther."

A silence of a few minutes, then Esther said:—

"You won't go to your uncle's to-morrow?"

Ralph mused.

"I can't say; but I—guess not. I'll give the aurora borealis another interview." And then, as if suddenly aroused, "It is too damp for you here, Esther. I won't keep you any longer. Good-night," and kissing her cheek he left her.

That night Madeline, resting her folded arms on the toilet table, looked into the glass and commented with herself thus:—

"He is certainly very handsome, and has more style and intelligence about him than half a dozen fashionable fops melted into one. I wonder if he is eligible. I tried to get some information from that clown of a brother, but all he could say was, 'A lawyer and particular friend of Esther's.' The lawyer part is favorable; and in regard to Esther—bah! if he is her lover, let her keep him, if she can! I admire him more than

any gentleman I have ever met. I shall question Esther to-morrow, and if everything is favorable, he shall be at my feet in two weeks, or Madeline Clyde is unworthy of her laurels." And with this most laudable resolution, she prepared for slumber.

"It is certainly delightful here in summer, Esther," said Madeline, as the two girls sat with their work under the trees the next morning. "But what do you do with yourself in the winter? I should die of *ennui*. You seem to be completely isolated; not a house in sight. Does any one else live in this country?"

Esther laughed.

"Indeed, there are plenty of people, and very agreeable ones, too, living not many hundred miles away from us. The trouble is, each house lies at the foot of a hill, and one is ignorant of the existence of his neighbor till suddenly he sees his castle lying at his feet."

"How poetically expressed! The same Esther as of the old bright days! But to come back to mortals and mortality. As the population is so dense, I suppose the winter must be a succession of parties and tea-drinkings."

"Yes, there are a good many, but I don't care much for them. You know I always was on the quiet order, and I haven't changed any. We have a large family. Ralph is with us a great deal; and our evenings pass so pleasantly at home that it is more of a trial than a pleasure to waste any of them at parties."

"Ralph? who is he? a brother I have not seen yet?"

"No. He is the gentleman you saw last night, Mr. McLeod."

"Ah! the young man who was so devoted to your father, and spent the whole evening discussing the crops, I think it was. I didn't observe anything particularly brilliant about him."

Esther flushed.

"You certainly didn't give him much chance to display his brilliancy, Madeline; but I assure you he possesses a large amount. Our first lawyers have prophesied a successful career for him."

"Is he a lawyer?"

"Yes; and he has already won more laurels than any man of his age in the State."

"Really, Esther, you arouse both my curiosity and interest. I am eager to cultivate his acquaintance. I always feel a deep interest in such rising stars. To me there is nothing more noble than a man struggling with fortune for fame."

Esther laughed.

"I am sorry to dethrone your hero, Madeline, but Ralph isn't the man. Fortune has always been on his side. He is an only child and his parents are wealthy. In fact, there is no need for him to spend an hour in toil." But a shadow fell over her. Madeline uttered a pretty little scream, and Ralph stood before them. The bad humor of the past night had flown, and he was as bright as the day.

"Good-morning, ladies," said he, bowing gracefully. "Miss Clyde, I beg pardon for startling you; but in return I claim some apology from you for the unpleasant information that I am ungainly enough to alarm a young lady."

Madeline smiled bewitchingly.

"Mr. McLeod does himself great injustice. The result is not always in harmony with the cause, for an angel suddenly dropped at one's feet would alarm her as much as a monster."

"Your illustration is"——

"Please, Esther, mother wants you," called one of those irrepressible little sisters.

Esther obeyed the call, and Ralph took her empty seat. A silence followed. The interruption had broken Ralph's chain of thought, and at a loss for something to say, he waited for his companion to speak first. But Madeline wasn't going to do anything of the kind. She intended to test his metal thoroughly this morning, and not one straw would she throw him to help him float. The silence became embarrassing. Ralph changed his hat to the other hand. From under her lashes Madeline watched him coolly and mercilessly. At last, in despair, Ralph jerked out:—

"Fine day, Miss Clyde."

A little smile played around her lips, and dropping her work in her lap, she asked, solemnly:—

"I wonder if one human expectation were ever realized?"

Ralph's composure was restored, and he put his hat on the ground.

"That's too deep a question for my limited information, Miss Clyde. I'll consult an authority on the subject and report the result. But why do you ask?"

Her eyes twinkled.

"Shall I tell?"

"By all means."

"Well, just before you appeared, Esther had extolled you for a paragon of talent and originality till my expectations were wrought up to a fearful pitch. I expected to see pearls drop from your lips; fancy the effect of your weather report."

Ralph bit his lip.

"I am unfortunate this morning. This is the second time I have shocked you; perhaps I had better anticipate the third time by leaving now." He picked up his hat. Then the mischief vanished from Madeline's face.

"There! now I've done it again! Said naughty things till I've offended you; and I wanted all the time to make you like me. Please forgive me this time, Mr. McLeod, and I'll try to be good in the future." The great blue eyes looked into his with a pleading gaze, and the red lip seemed to quiver. Down went the hat again, and nothing but sheer force of will kept its owner from going down, too, on his knees before her.

"Don't look so, Miss Clyde; you distress me. I was a brute to speak as I did. May I indeed dare to hope you will like me a little?"

How beautifully she played her game! It was not her policy to take the sentimental tone just yet. She had just thrown that little burst in to give a dash of color to the conversation; so that he would think of it after he left her, and at last stow it away in his memory in some little nook, where it would not be jostled by everythings. But she wasn't ready to either receive or give any sudden outburst of friendship. She dropped her eyes, and wrapping herself up in propriety, replied:—

"I don't know; perhaps, if you work for it. Suppose you begin the campaign by capturing my cotton, which I see has gone on an exploring expedition in that high grass."

Ralph arose with rather a crest-fallen air, and recovered the cotton.

"Thank you," as demurely as a nun. "I wonder what keeps Esther so long?"

"I really can't say; but if you are anxious about her, I will inquire."

"Oh, no! I wouldn't trouble you for worlds; and besides, here she comes now. What has kept you so long, Esther? I had begun to fear that your exit was final."

"Have I been so very long?"

"I suppose not, according to the measurement of time; but it seemed ages to me."

Ralph tried not to look disgusted. Esther laughed.

"I'm sorry, dear, but don't feel badly, for I was talking of you. Hugh wanted to see me about a ride for this afternoon; would you like it?"

"Very much, but for the reason I have never ridden anything more dangerous than a hobby horse in my life, and I fear that I would need at least two escorts to pick me up as fast as I could fall off."

"Are you in earnest, Madeline? wouldn't you like to go?"

"I would be delighted, if you think it possible."

"Of course it is. Every one has to ride for the first time, and very few are killed by it. Ralph is a capital teacher. He will take charge of you, and I'll be responsible for the broken bones. You can go, can't you, Ralph?"

"Oh, certainly! that is, if Miss Clyde thinks that she can drag out a few miserable hours in my society."

"I shall be so interested in the preservation of my neck, that I shan't mind it."

"Thank you; and for fear that you may change your mind, I'll take my departure now. What time do we start, Esther?"

"Four. We will go to 'The Witches Wash Bowl,' and I want to be back by six."

"Very well; I'll be in time. *Au revoir*, Miss Clyde."

Four o'clock came, and they started for the ride. At first, Madeline was very timid, and required constant care from Ralph, much to the disgust of Hugh, who had reckoned on a continuation of the past evening. Poor boy! That was a bright dream, but it is over forever, and erelong you will bless your guiding star that it faded before it left its mark.

The weather and scenery were delightful. By the time they reached the "bowl," Madeline's skill and confidence had increased astonishingly. She was in a charming mood, and before they returned, Ralph had begged the privilege of giving her riding lessons every day, till something more agreeable "turned up."

The summer rolled on, and if practice makes perfect, Madeline's prospects for being the champion *equestrienne* of the world were good. Many things had "turned up" during this time; but as soon as the spirit of disturbance was laid, the lessons were resumed. Esther, happy that Ralph was at last recon-

cited to Madeline, often remained at home, and they always stayed later when she was not with them. Gossips, of course, began to talk; but Esther never listened to gossip. Madeline's visit was drawing to a close, and Esther gave her a farewell party. It was only a modest affair, not a crush; Esther abominated those things. Just faces enough to prevent both monotony and confusion; the object was to please, not to dazzle. Esther invited one young lady to tea. This was Lucy Rushton, her most intimate friend. Lucy was a frank noble girl, with a face as truthful and fresh as her heart. She was devoted to Esther, but she didn't like Madeline; and Madeline returned the feeling with interest; the result was a painful politeness between them; and the hour which elapsed between tea and the arrival of the guests, was a well-bred inquisition, which irritated poor Lucy's blunt nature almost to frenzy. More than once she hovered on the brink of open warfare. At last, deliverance came in the shape of the guests, and Lucy retired to a corner, vowing vengeance and a merciless surveillance of Miss Clyde's conduct in the future, and that evening in particular.

The guests had nearly all arrived, but Ralph was not among them. Madeline grew nervous. The dancing began. Still no Ralph, and Madeline reluctantly gave her hand to some one, she didn't notice who. Had she suspected how closely Lucy was watching her, she might have feigned a little interest; but she was blissfully unconscious of that maiden's attention, and her partner found her very stupid. The dance was over and she was going to a seat, when she heard her name, and Ralph stood beside her. Her air changed at once. She dropped her partner's arm, and held up her finger at him.

"O wickedness! What has kept you so long?"

"Not my will, you may be sure. Have you been dancing?"

"Yes; I couldn't help it."

"Never mind. Will you go out on the piazza?" he asked.

"Yes." And without a word of apology, she went away, leaving the astonished youth to compose an essay on the manners of city girls.

It was a lovely night. The moon shimmered softly through the trees, and all the other *et ceteras* were in good order. They walked in silence for a short time, and then Ralph said:—

"Let us sit down." He drew two chairs in the shadow, and they seated themselves. The dancing had begun again in the parlor, and they were alone. Good angels, save them now, for they floated on very deep water and their craft was frail. The silence continued. Madeline waited for Ralph to speak, but he was fighting too hard a battle to dare to trust his tongue. It was the old, old contest between conscience and self; and this was the burden of it:—

Self said, "She has no claim upon me. I have never asked her to be my wife."

Conscience replied, "Coward, she has every claim. You have wooed her from childhood; and the tacit tie that binds you is the most binding, because it is the fruit of her perfect faith."

"I can't help that. I can't be responsible for her fancies."

"You have given her just cause for every hope she has."

"I thought I loved her then. I don't now."

"She loves you just the the same."

"Yes, that is all very well, but I love another."

"You have no right to. Dare you wreck her happiness?"

"Then my happiness is nothing."

"Ralph!"

He started from his meditations; she had never called him Ralph before.

"What is it?" Dearest trembled on his lips, but he checked it.

"Why are you so quiet to-night? Are you ill, or sad?"

At that moment, but a few feet from them in the parlor, Lucy put her arm about Esther, and asked:—

"Where is Ralph, Esther?"

Esther looked around the room.

"I don't know. He was here a few minutes ago. I guess he's with Madeline."

Lucy looked at her steadily.

"Esther, you are a wonderful girl."

"And you are a naughty one, Lucy. You have tried all your life to spoil me, and if you don't stop soon, you will accomplish your aim by making me vain of my resistance."

They were standing apart from the crowd, and Esther kissed her friend's cheek. Lucy's eyes sparkled brighter than usual.

"Esther, you know I love you."

"Of course I do."

"Then you will forgive me if I say something that may hurt you."

"I would rather not have the cause to forgive you. Why need you say anything to hurt me?"

"Because—because I think I ought to. Say you will forgive me?"

"Yes, I will. Now let us have the 'Raw Bones and Bloody Head.'"

Lucy hesitated, and then jerked out:—

"You may think me impertinent and meddlesome, Esther, but I can't stand silently by and see you imposed upon any longer. Madeline Clyde is trying her best to come between you and Ralph."

A sharp pain shot through Esther's heart. She put Lucy's arm from her, and said, coldly:—

"I have no doubt but that your motives are good, Lucy, but you have rather transgressed your privileges."

"O Esther, please forgive me! You know I only meant kindness."

The tears in Lucy's eyes recalled Esther.

"Forgive me, Lucy, for speaking so unkindly, and behaving so ridiculously. I am very much obliged for your interest, but don't be anxious, my dear. I am not a bit jealous, and I am very glad that Ralph enjoys Madeline's society."

"Esther, you are so truthful yourself that you can't suspect deceit in another. Pardon me once more; but if you would only be more watchful, you"——

"My dear Lucy, I never watched any one in my life. But I'll tell you what you can do; go and hunt them up right away, and if you overhear Ralph say one improper thing, come and tell me." And she left her to speak to a guest.

Lucy stood a moment, and then started in grim determination to fulfill Esther's playful advice. We will hurry ahead of her, and take up Ralph and Madeline where we left them.

"Are you ill, or sad?" And Madeline's voice trembled in sympathy.

Ralph shut his teeth, and tried to laugh.

"Neither, Miss Clyde; a little mooney, I guess. See how beautifully the light silvers that bush. But I beg your mercy! I believe in the infancy of our acquaintance you snubbed me for commenting on the beauties of nature."

Conscience had just replied to the last argument. He had faintly resolved to fight on that side, and he made this dash to get from under fire. It was in vain; she dragged him up to the guns again.

"Did I? I am sorry for it. I thought that you had forgotten all those disagreeable things. You are cruel to speak of them now."

Ralph made one more effort.

"I must do many 'cruel things,' I think."

She turned her eyes full upon him. They were moist, and it might have been the play of a moonbeam, but he thought her lip trembled. At this moment self shrieked:—

"Man, you are a brute! She loves you!" And before conscience could utter a plea, he had drawn her to his breast and was saying, "Madeline, my darling, my love, forgive me! I will never be cruel to you again!"

The golden head nestled closer to him, and neither saw a form steal softly back into the house. Nor did they notice the shadow that fell before them, when, a few minutes later, the form returned leading another, which stood with parted lips and clasped hands to listen.

"But Esther, darling! They say that she loves you, and that you are engaged to her."

The head bent eagerly forward to catch the answer.

"No, darling, I am not engaged to her. I once fancied that I liked her; but after I saw you, I knew that it was only a fancy. In regard to her loving me, I'm sorry if she does; but I can't help it—I won't give up my sunbeam for all the Esthers in the world."

The form dropped its head, and by the moonlight one could see a shudder like a mighty convulsion pass over her; and then she turned and walked swiftly away. The other followed her; but with an imperative gesture she waved her back, and going down the steps, she was soon lost in the glimmer and shade. The other sat down on the steps and buried her face in her hands. The lovers, forgetful of all but their happiness, built castles for the future, and through the open windows came merry music and the sound of the dancers' feet.

An hour passed, and then inquiries were made for Esther. Lucy heard them, and to defer the discovery as long as possible, stole away to Esther's room. Ralph and Madeline aroused themselves from their dream of rapture and returned to the parlor, and for a while all went merry again. Another hour passed, and still no Esther.

"It is very strange," said her mother. "Perhaps she is up-stairs."

She went to her room and tried the door. It was locked. She knocked; Lucy thought

it was Esther and opened at once. Her eyes were red, and she was very pale. Mrs. Merton started.

"Lucy! what is the matter? Where is Esther?"

"Esther! Hasn't she come in yet? I thought you were she."

"Come in? Where has she gone? What is the matter, child?"

"Don't ask me! don't ask me! It is dreadful! She went into the shrubbery. She would not let me go with her; and I thought she would be better alone. Go after her. I fear something has happened. O Esther!" And she burst into tears.

Alarmed and astonished, Mrs. Merton hurried down-stairs and told what she could of Lucy's incoherent story, and then a search was begun.

Calls were made for Ralph, hoping that he might be able to throw some light on the mystery; but no Ralph was to be found. His guilty conscience told him the truth, and not daring to face the possible result, he left the house.

They searched the paths near the house; no trace of her. They went across the lawn to a place where the boughs interlaced so thickly that the sunlight could scarcely creep through, and there, in the cold, wet grass, they found her lying, still and white. With the dread their lips could not tell burning in their eyes, they lifted her, and bore her to the house. Madeline met them at the door. One look at the marble-like face, and crying, "She is dead!" she fell fainting to the floor.

But Esther was not dead. They put her on her bed, and at length consciousness returned. She opened her eyes, looked vacantly around, and then, passing her hand across her brow, said slowly:—

"Poor Esther! Isn't it dreadful?"

The white faces around her grew whiter, and each looked at the other for the hope that none could give. The blow had spared her life, but her reason had gone.

All night her mother and Lucy watched beside her. She slept quietly, and in the morning rose and dressed herself as usual; but there was no change. The same dreary light was in her eyes, the same hopeless, crushed look on her face. She spoke to no one and noticed nothing, and when spoken to, she would look up at the speaker with a piteous, frightened gaze and say:—

"Yes. Poor Esther! Isn't it dreadful?"

Her physician said that it would end in a violent fit of illness, and then, if her life were spared, her reason might be restored. But it did not end thus. As the summer waned her strength began to fail. They watched her with the tenderest care. She uttered no complaint, and gave no sign of suffering, but slowly and surely she grew weaker every day; and when the hazy autumn came, the time when Ralph had thought to make her his wife, they laid the tired heart to rest.

And what of Ralph and Madeline? She left for her home the morning after that terrible night, and Ralph soon followed her. He never saw Esther again, and for a while he was overwhelmed with remorse. But it was only a woman's heart that was broken. The world called that no crime; and its favors, and Madeline's smiles, soon reconciled him; and when the violets blossomed on Esther's grave, he led Madeline to the altar. The wedding was brilliant and the bride beautiful, and friends showered congratulations on them; all looked bright. Can we, should we, wish them happiness?

A LEGEND.

THERE has come to my mind a legend, a thing I had half forgot,
And whether I read it or dreamed it—ah, well, it matters not.
It is said that in heaven at midnight a great bell softly swings,
And man may listen and hearken to the wonderful music that rings.
If he puts from his heart's inner chamber all the passion, pain and strife,
Heartache and weary longing that throb in the pulses of life—
If he thrust from his soul all hatred, all thoughts of wicked things,
He can hear in the holy twilight how the bell of the angels rings.
And I think there is in this legend, if we open our eyes to see,
Somewhat of an inner meaning, my friend, to you and me.
Let us look in our hearts and question, Can pure thoughts enter in
To a soul if it be already the dwelling of thoughts of sin?
So then let us ponder a little; let us look in our hearts and see
If the twilight bells of the angels could ring for us —you and me.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS' STORY-TELLER.

THE BEACH PICNIC.

BY ROBERT E. TENER.

NOT very far to the south of the Golden Gate lies a beautiful, tree-embowered little town, bright with every flower, fragrant and glowing with roses, hemmed in on the one hand by the blue sea, on the other girt by a crescent of blue mountains, rugged and forest-covered, and terraced with green foot-hills, that in some places nearly reach the water.

Here lived three little girls, Jane, Mary, and Fanny Sherwood, and their little brother "Toddles," a young man aged fifteen months, who owed his name to his mode of locomotion, recently acquired. Here, also, with them, lived their cousins, Josie, Fred, and Pearl, who had come from San Francisco to spend the summer, and get fresh color in their little cheeks, grown pale in city rooms and streets.

June was beginning; the hay had just been harvested, or still, in some places, lay in fragrant piles; the grass along the lanes was high and green; the roses overflowed every pretty garden, or climbed the houses to the very peaks of the gables; the air was soft and delicious; and, to crown all, the children knew that a picnic was the order of the day.

"A drive round the cliff, and then a picnic at the sea-side, Fred," shouted Mary, running up to him where he stood with Pearl wrapt in contemplation of a hen and flock of downy chicks.

"That'll be splendid," said Fred. "When are we going?"

"Right away. Father's hitching up now, and mother sent me to call you two over. Come, Pearlie."

And they all ran back to the house.

There a lively scene was in progress. A three-seated spring-wagon, to which Mr. Sherwood was just attaching the horses, stood at the door, while his wife and her sister were packing mysterious-looking baskets and bundles below the seats, and the children were buzzing round like so many bees. Before long all was ready, the last basket was packed away, and the children, with many injunctions to be careful of upsetting the treasures below, were allowed to scramble to their seats. The little visitors from the city were given the place of honor on the front seat beside their uncle, while their cousins had the one in the middle, except Toddles, who sat between his mother and Aunt Alice on the back seat, or lay on their laps.

They soon rolled out of the dusty streets, and, leaving the town, passed along the cliff, high above the placid, ebbing waters of the Pacific, which lay smooth as oil below, scarcely heaving under the vast beds of purple seaweed that rested upon its blue bosom. Then a drive through the town, and out again, along shady roads, among the woods, and leaving these, down past a lake hemmed from the ocean by a sand bank, crossed by the waters only at high tide, and down through groves of storm-beaten oaks, brought them at last to the very beach.

"There is no fun like a picnic on the beach," Josie solemnly declared that night to Jane, with whom she slept.

It is no wonder that this was the verdict of all the youngsters, for this is the way the picnic was managed. Uncle Sherwood stopped the horses under the cliff, and every one jumped out on the warm sand; and then he unhitched the team, and tied the horses to a great log lying near. This done, he sent the eldest children to find long poles among the driftwood, scattered about near by, while he made Fred dig holes in the sand with his hands, as deep as he could reach.

"Fred throws up the dirt just like a gopher," said Josie, as she watched him.

Then Mr. Sherwood put the ends of the poles in the holes, and firmed the sand about them with his foot. Then he tied cross-pieces from these stakes to the seats of the wagon, and threw over the frame so made four or five shawls brought along for that purpose. The buggy robes were now spread in the shade beneath, and the tent was complete.

"Now, Fred, you're the only other man present, so you must help me," said his uncle. "Take these irons, and stick them in the sand over there, and here are some matches to start a fire."

The irons were light, round bars, turned down at right angles about six inches from each end, and pointed. Fred pushed the points a little way into the ground, placing the bars a foot or so apart, and then scooped away the sand between them. Then, under his uncle's directions, he placed a large square plate of flat iron resting on these supports.

"Now, Fred, gather some of those small bits of driftwood that are lying about, and start your fire," said his uncle, "Josie and Jane can go to the farm-house on the hill above, and get this can full of water, and then we'll hand over the rest of the preparations to the ladies."

By the time the girls got back with the water Fred had a fine fire burning, and Mr. Sherwood had quite finished his tent. Toddles was making short runs over the sand, which generally ended abruptly in full-length sprawls. The other children were wading in the surf, shrieking with delight and mock fear when the cold, white foam swelled up to their knees. Jane and Josie and Fred ran to join them, while Mr. Sherwood, amused by their capers, threw himself on the sand to watch them, and Toddles sat contentedly digging holes near by. Mrs. Sherwood and her sister, on their part, now set about preparing the lunch. Bologna sausage, cold mutton, and hard boiled eggs, with bread, a pat of butter and can of milk, made up the bill of fare so far as the baskets furnished it ready to eat. But Aunt Alice, who had not been idle all this time, now added a great pot of smoking chicken fricasee, which had been cooked at home and was now quickly heated on the fire. The teapot was steaming merrily, too, when all the rest was ready, and Mrs. Sherwood announced that it was time to call the children.

But where were the children? With the exception of Toddles, who had fallen asleep with the shell in one hand and his head on the pile of sand he had raised, nothing was to be seen of them.

Mr. Sherwood roused himself.

"Oh, they can't be far away," he said; "I saw them a few moments since. They must have gone round that point yonder."

"Well, please hunt them up at once," replied his wife. "We are all ready now, and they must be as hungry as little bears. I'm sure I am myself."

So Mr. Sherwood started down the beach, and soon passed the little headland that ran from the cliff nearly to the water. He could now see along a good stretch of beach, but it was quite bare of any signs of life—no children were to be seen. Becoming a little anxious, he pressed on, and soon thought he distinguished the murmur of voices above the lap of the tide. The next moment Josie ran out of the very rock, as it seemed.

"O uncle," she cried, "I didn't know you were here. I was running to tell you that we had found such a nice camping-place, far better than the tent. Come and see."

And she seized him by the hand and pulled him toward the jutting rock from beyond which she had just come.

Here the soft sandstone of the cliff had been worn away into what at first appeared to be a large, dark cave; but there was evidently an opening somewhere from it to the fields above, for when Mr. Sherwood, under Josie's guidance, had passed the entrance, he could see light at the far end. The floor was of firm, wet sand, sloping gently upward, and the roof of the soft yellowish rock of the cliffs. The cave trended a little to the right, and passing the curve so made, Mr. Sherwood at last discovered all the truants grouped beneath the "skylight," as they called it. This was a great, ragged hole in the roof, where the rock and earth had fallen into the cave. There was no trace, however, of the mass that must at one time have cumbered the place where they now stood. It had been all washed away long ago by high tides, and the sand was as smooth and clean beneath the hole as anywhere else. Mr. Sherwood was greeted tumultuously by the group of children, who clamored to have the picnic brought to the cave.

"It's like a house," said Fred; "and that hole will give lots of light, and do for a chimney too; and see, here in this corner is plenty of driftwood to make a fire with, and"——

"And isn't it cool, uncle?" chimed in Josie; "and it's as clean as if it were swept, and we found ever so many shells for Toddles, and Pearl found a little place over there, just like a cradle, for her doll."

"Well," said Mr. Sherwood, when he got a chance to speak, "this is a fine mansion, without a doubt. It is very like a house, as you say, with its windows, and chimney, and Pearl's nursery, and it is as cool as a cellar, but what about a door?"

"A door, uncle?" cried Fred. "Why, there's the mouth of the cave, big enough to let a regiment in."

"Yes, Fred, this cave has a mouth big enough to swallow a regiment, but in a few hours, when the tide turns, they could not get out again, unless like witches they could fly up the chimney. Don't you see, children, we should all be drowned if we remained here long?"

Laying at full length, their heads supported on one hand, or sitting in careless attitudes around the cloth spread in the centre of the tent, the party soon showed how finely sea air sharpens appetites, by the way in which they made the lunch disappear. The sideboard, loaded with cakes, pies, jelly, and strawberries, and cherries, was next attacked, and then the cloth was shaken and re-spread, and handfuls of nuts and raisins placed upon it to conclude the feast.

The children began playing again, but their elders lay and chatted, lazily enjoying the sweet, calm air that fanned them gently as it flowed past with the fresh salt flavor of the ocean in it. They looked across the water, flickering into innumerable little points of light, to the bluish gray hills of Monterey that lay veiled in a gossamer mist. On the nearer shore, on a little cape running into the sea, they could see the lighthouse standing, with tiny rock islands, crowned with gulls, lying before it, white in the blue water. A duck here and there bobbed up and down, or suddenly dipped its head, and disappeared in a long dive. The swallows flew about the higher parts of the cliff, apparently making social calls at each other's homes, which riddled the soft rock with innumerable holes.

The minutes and the hours flew past almost unnoticed. The tide, turning, began to lap a little louder far out on the beach, and the breeze grew fresher and cooler. Mr. Sherwood had dropped unconsciously into a nap, and his wife began to clear away the remains of the lunch, and pack the baskets, while Miss Alice romped with the children. Fred and Mary were making a garden. Fred dug it with a shell, and piled a wall about it, while Mary planted it with the nosegays brought from home, sticking the stems of the flowers in the sand. Fred whittled little paling out of bits of driftwood, and fenced it in, and then all the rest were called to admire the gay results of their labors. Jane and Josie had borrowed their penknives from Mr. Sherwood and Fred, and now, helped by Miss Alice, carved the names of all the party on the cliff. Fanny searched for places in the beach where little holes showed that sand fleas were below, and dug them up from their damp resting-place, to delight Toddles by seeing them hop off in a straight line toward the sea. But all were not allowed thus to make good their escape, for Fanny placed some sand in her handkerchief, and put a number of the funny, transparent little things, which Fred declared must be "young schrimps," in it, to serve as bait for the grand fishing excursion promised for the next day.

But among all the workers where was Pearl? She neither helped to plant the garden, nor to carve names and impossible animals on the rock, nor did she clap her hands with fat Toddles over the lively antics of the sand fleas. Where was Pearl? She had been seen not long after lunch nursing her doll, and vainly trying to tempt its appetite with a bunch of cherries, and had been heard to declare that "the poor 'ittle thin' had eat too much picanic, so it had."

Since then no one had seen Pearl, though it was now time to go home, and Mr. Sherwood was just going to hitch the horses again to the wagon when she was missed.

"Look about, children, she can't be far off," said he. "Don't be alarmed, wife, nothing can possibly have happened to her; the youngsters will soon find her."

But, though the shore resounded with cries of "Pearlie! Pearlie!" though the little gully, now dry, down which a winter current had cut its way in a tortuous course, full of holes and crannies, was explored all the way to the field above by Fred, no Pearl was to be seen, and no voice responded to her name.

The elders began to look anxious.

"Can she have gone to the cave again?" said Mrs. Sherwood, to whom the children had described it while at lunch. "Surely the little thing would be afraid to go there alone."

"The cave! She must have gone there. She was the most reluctant of them all to leave it. God preserve her! I hope no harm is done," said Mr. Sherwood, with a very serious face, setting off with long strides, as he spoke, down the beach. The others followed closely. He stopped before he reached the place. "See that point of rock jutting out there, that the water is breaking against," said he. "When I and the children were here before, we passed below it on a dry beach. The mouth of the

cave is just beyond, and must be quite covered now, for I had to stoop to enter it."

"What shall we do? what shall we do? She must be there," cried her aunt. "Oh, how could I be so careless, and the little thing in my charge."

"Come, come," said Mr. Sherwood, though his own face was pale, "this won't do, wife. Don't cry, children," he added to the frightened flock around, who began to fear, they scarcely knew what. "Scatter again, and look everywhere else, we are not certain she is here. She may have wandered up the road by which we came to the beach. Fred, come with me; I may need you."

He went quickly back to the wagon, and took a long, stout tethering rope from under the back seat. Throwing this over his shoulder, he ran up the road, and, reaching the field above, turned in the direction of the cave. Fred followed at his heels, scared and anxious, but watching every motion of his uncle, hoping to be able to help him. They passed above the point that the sea now beat against, and a moment later came to the big hole at the end of the cave. It was like a great well, and almost as difficult to see into, for the only light that reached its bottom was from above, and Mr. Sherwood found it very hard to distinguish any object within the opening. Fred's eyes, sharper, or more readily adapting themselves to the gloom, discovered something in the far corner, and cried:—

"Pearlie! I'm sure that's Pearlie, uncle!"

"Here I is!" cried a shrill voice in reply.

And the object below jumped up, and ran quickly toward them.

"Thank God!" said Mr. Sherwood. "Fred, get me a short stick, quick. Pearl, stay just where you are; don't move at all."

He took the long line, and made a loop at one end, and a little above tied the stick securely that Fred brought him. Fortunately there was a part of the mouth of the hole where the loose surface soil had all been washed away, leaving the solid rock bare. Mr. Sherwood leaped down to this place, and, standing at the edge of the hole, dropped the loop at Pearl's feet, first tying the other end of the rope round his own waist, to make sure of retaining it, and to have his hands quite free.

"Now, Pearlie, do just what I bid you. Do you hear?"

"Yeth, uncle."

"Well, put your foot in that loop; carefully now. Push the rope well under the instep. Now catch the stick, and hold tight. Are you sure you have it all right?"

"Yeth, indeed, uncle."

"Now hold as tight as ever you can, and don't be frightened. I'm going to pull you up,—to give you a nice little ride."

Pearlie clenched her small fingers tightly around the stick, and her uncle drew the rope taut. Just then, a long, snake-like tongue of water curled over the sand, and glided to Pearl's feet, covering them to the ankles. She screamed at the cold, unexpected touch.

"Hold tight now, Pearlie dear. The water sha'n't reach you again. Now we go up! up! up!"

And, with the words, her uncle quickly raised the rope, hand over hand, till a little shining, curly head, girt with blue ribbon, appeared in the sunlight, and Pearlie, caught up in his strong arms, was saved! The waters hissed below, filling the cave, but no one minded it now. Mr. Sherwood, Pearl still in his arms, ran to the edge of the cliff above the beach, and, with a loud "Hurrah!" waved his handkerchief. Those below responded heartily, and Pearl, brought down to the camping-ground, found herself a petted heroine, instead of getting the scolding she maybe deserved for running off alone. But, in the midst of the joyous greeting, her face clouded, and she burst into tears.

"Oh, my dollie! my dollie!" she sobbed. "She will be drownded!"

And then it came out that dollie couldn't sleep in the strong light on the beach, and so Pearl had gone to the cool, dark cave to put her to sleep in the stone cradle she had discovered there.

"And I yent asleep too," said Pearlie, "till uncle woked me, and then I fordot my dollie."

Poor dollie was left to the mercies of the great Pacific, and her fate is still unknown; but Pearlie was consoled by the promise of a new doll, twice as big, with eyes that would open and shut, and real hair, and she mourned no more for "Eliza Catherine," left behind in the cave.

What happiness so great as a peril averted? and this happiness filled all the hearts that beat in that wagon, as it rolled gayly home, among the roses, and under the rows of rustling maples, and of locusts heavy with white blossoms, breathing their sweet, rich odor through all the land.

HOME TOPICS.

ENJOY AS YOU GO.—Some people mean to have a good time when their hard work is done—say at fifty. Others plan to enjoy themselves when their children grow up. Others mean to take their pleasures when they get rich, or when their business is on a sure foundation, or the farm is paid for, or the grind of some particular sorrow is past. These individuals might as well give up the idea of ever having a good time. The season of delight which is so long waited for rarely comes. Disease, poverty and death each claims its victims. The lives of those we love or our own go out, and then what is left?

Then take your pleasure to-day while yet there is time. Things may not be in the best shape for the visit that you have been so long planning to your only sister. It might be better if you could wait until you had a more stylish suit of clothes, or till the boy was home from college to look after the place; but she is ready now. You are both growing old—you had better go now. John drives round with the horse. "Jump in, mother," he says; "it is a lovely day, and you need the fresh air." Don't say, "I can't go, I was intending to make doughnuts," or "My crimping-pins are not out," or "My dress is not changed." Put on a warm cloak, tie a veil around your hat, and take such things when you can get them; they are apt to be shy when you want them again.

Don't say, "I shall be glad when that child is grown up. What trouble he makes." No; enjoy his cunning ways; revel in his affectionate hugs and kisses; they will not be so plentiful by and by. Enjoy his childhood; it will look sweet to you when he is gone forever. Enjoy the littles of every day. The great favors of fortune come but to few, and those who have them tell us that the quiet homely joys which are within the reach of all are infinitely better. Let us not cast them away, but treasure every sunbeam and get the light and warmth from it that the blessings hold.

VACATION MAY KILL.—Every year the vacation season claims its quota of victims, says the London *Lancet*. Many who have become somewhat enfeebled by long confinement and close attention to the calls of sedentary occupations rush away for a short holiday, and endeavor by systematic over-exertion to make up for the inactivity of the past month. It then shows that the circulatory and respiratory systems work hand in hand, and that there is great danger, when, if the heart be weak, the respiration is at the same time temporarily stopped by exertion.

The *Lancet* declares that many sudden deaths are caused each year by misuse of the vacation season, and also affirms that the experience of most city physicians shows that over-strain is often followed by prolonged illness. We know a wise lawyer who never did anything the first day of his vacation, as little as possible the second, took a short walk the third, two short walks the fourth, and not until the eighth day was ready to climb a mountain. By this cautious course he grew stronger to the end, and returned home with vitality enough to work till the time the next outing came around.

One can make a great change in his habits without detriment if he takes a long time to do it, but only young persons can risk sudden changes, and they sometimes fall victims to the strain.

BOSTON CREAM CAKES.—One half pound of butter, three fourths of a pound of sifted flour, eight eggs, one pint of warm water; stir the butter into the water and set it on the fire in a sauce-pan and let it boil, stirring it often; when it boils stir in the flour, let it boil two minutes, then take it off and let it cool; beat the eggs very light and stir them into this cooled paste; bake this on well-buttered tins ten minutes, dropping a large spoonful at a time, and be careful not to let these run together. Inside cream: One quart of rich sweet milk, four tablespoonfuls of corn starch, three eggs well beaten, two cupfuls of powdered white sugar; wet the corn starch with milk enough to make a smooth paste; boil the rest of the milk, and to this add the corn starch, sugar and eggs, stirring it till it is smooth and thick; add also one tablespoonful of butter and one teaspoonful of vanilla; set the mixture aside to cool; when cold, split the cakes and fill them with this mixture.

CHOCOLATE CAKE.—Two cupfuls of white sugar, one cupful of butter, one cupful of rich sweet milk, three cupfuls of sifted flour, and the whites of four eggs beaten to a stiff froth, one teaspoonful of cream of tartar, one half teaspoonful of soda; bake in layers and spread between each the following frosting: The yolks of two eggs beaten and added to one half cup of sweet milk and one and one half cups of powdered white sugar; boil till as thick as molasses, and then add one third of a cup of Baker's chocolate dissolved or grated; stir the chocolate well into the frosting and spread between the layers; frost the top of the cake with white frosting.

A pungent, pleasant, powerful, perfect pain preventative is N. K. Brown's Ess. Jamaica Ginger.

CURIOUS AND OTHER MATTERS.

A SPUNKY SERPENT.

The king snake is the wonder of all ophidians, writes a correspondent from Fort Davis, Texas, in the *Philadelphia Times*. A diminutive specimen, scarcely more than three feet in length, yet the little fellow is so active, so wary, and is endowed with such rare pluck that, as his name implies, he is truly and unquestionably the king of the family.

I was out after peccaries, or musk hogs, and sat down under a bunch of chaparral, near a stream of water, to rest and eat a bit of lunch. While thus employed, I was somewhat startled to see a moccasin come rushing through the grass within a couple of yards of me, and go dashing head over heels, so to speak, splash into the water. After him, like a shot, was an elongated streak of bright green. In he went too, and then I knew there was fun in store. The water was a sort of pool, without much of an inlet or outlet, and unless by going across sand and rocks or coming back on shore, neither combatant could escape.

Sure enough, after racing and tearing around in the pool like mad, both pursuer and pursued emerged from the opposite side, and proved to be, as I thought, a cotton-mouth moccasin and a rather small king snake. The latter was after the other, however, and before the big fellow gave up the race or could throw himself into an attitude of defense the king snake was upon him. The sole and entire power of the latter reptile lies in his wonderful constricting abilities. He has no fangs, no poison, nothing to attack or defend himself with save his coils, but these are so marvelously powerful and so terrible in compressing that nothing in the animal or reptile world, according to its size, can begin to compare with him for the especial quality.

No sooner had the moccasin stopped and turned to defend himself, than like lightning his enemy jumped upon him and proceeded to squeeze the life out of his ugly carcass. Tighter and tighter drew the coils, always arranged so that the big one could not strike, and pretty soon the king's body was nearly lost to view, so slender had it grown from the constriction and so deep was he in the fat flesh of the moccasin. It looked like a green cord wound tightly around the latter's body.

At last the moccasin ceased resistance, and allowed his body to hang loose and inert. For ten minutes longer did the king snake hold his grip, then gradually loosened it, but always ready to resume his squeezing should his enemy exhibit any signs of life. Finally he uncoiled himself entirely, saw that the moccasin was no more, and then glided off through the brush.

THE CASPIAN SEA.—The Caspian sea lies eighty-five feet below the level of the Black sea, and is the greatest body of water in the world lying below the sea level. It is remarkable not only for this fact, but for the changes that have occurred in its level. About the first century of our era there is no doubt the level of the sea stood eighty-five feet above its present horizon, and of course spread over a vastly more extensive area than at present. The Russian Geographical society has printed a treatise, written by N. M. Philipof, of these remarkable changes of level. Since the early part of the Christian era, a general and gradual decline of the level of the sea has taken place.

Lieutenant Sokolef, a naval officer, while working in the Caspian region from 1843 to 1848, collected much information. He found that in the present century the level had steadily fallen, just as in the last century it has risen, causing great apprehension among the inhabitants of an inundation, and given rise to the belief in periodical variations every thirteen years.

Lerch, while in Baku, in 1734 and 1747, found submerged buildings which had stood on dry land thirty years before, and he mentions a saying of the Persians that the sea rose and fell alternately every thirty years. Mr. Philipof has made a special study of the whole question. Inquiring into the causes of these changes of level, he finds a variety of influences at work, such as wind driving the water towards certain coasts, temperature of the air causing in summer evaporation and consequent fall in level, and in winter cold producing a rise in level. Rivers, rain and earthquakes are also among the active agencies, causing fluctuations from month to month and from day to day.

A CATARACT IN LABRADOR.—The interior of Labrador undoubtedly is the largest unexplored area on this continent. Up the Grand river, which empties into the Atlantic Ocean at Hamilton Inlet, are the Grand Falls, which, if everything is true about them that is reported, are the most stupendous falls in the world. They are only about a hundred and sixty miles up the river, but only two white men have ever seen them.

Mr. R. F. Holme, three years ago, went from England to visit the Grand Falls. He organized a little party to accompany him inland and arrived within about fifty miles of the falls, when he was compelled to return on account of the failure of his provisions. The Labrador Indians say these falls are haunted, and they carefully avoid them, believing that they will die if they

look upon them. The two white men who have seen them are Mr. Maclean, who, as he was ascending the river in 1839, was stopped by the falls, and Mr. Kennedy, who over thirty years ago had charge of Hudson Bay post in Labrador. Mr. Holme says the height of the falls is not certainly known, but in some respects there is little doubt they are the greatest in the world.

Though inner Labrador is so inadequately known, we are aware that it is a vast table-land whose limits are quite clearly defined. In the southeast the descent from the table-land is quite sudden, and almost immediately after leaving the plateau a level is reached that is very little above that of the sea. The Grand Falls are the place where the Grand river tumbles over the edge of this table-land, and almost the whole of the great drop is effected in this one descent. Professor Hind gives the height of this plateau as 2,240 feet. It has been estimated that the region at the foot of the falls is only 200 feet above sea level, and that the waters of Grand river have a perpendicular descent of about 2,000 feet.

JAPANESE TORTURE.—"Yes, until recently they had exquisite methods of torture and punishment in Japan," said Robert Johnstone, of Tokio, who has lived in that country for the last twenty-seven years. He said this in connection with a conversation and discussion of the proposed treaty extension throughout the Japanese Empire. The Japanese, said Mr. Johnstone, were willing to grant Europeans and foreigners generally free access to all parts of the country, but they insisted that all foreigners should be amenable to Japanese laws before a Japanese judge.

"Aside from crucifixion, the beheading of maidens and the flogging of soles, they had, twelve or fifteen years ago, what I have always considered the most refined and exquisite torture possible. This was death by lack of sleep. Cruel? There is no word in the English language strong enough to denounce that bestial and outrageous treatment. It is done like this: A regular box-like trap was prepared, say six feet high by two and a half feet wide. At the top was a wooden mold—cangur, it was called in the native tongue—where the head of the imprisoned man was firmly held. It was so arranged that by assuming any other than an erect position the whole weight of the offender's body would rest on the chin. The man could neither lean backward, nor could he rest at any great length of time on his feet. The torture so endured is impossible to conceive. There was absolutely no chance for the man to sleep.

"Another terrible punishment devised was to take a wooden sliver, saturate it thoroughly with turpentine, then drive it beneath the big toe nail of the culprit and set fire to it. But these barbaric customs have departed. The Code Napoleon has been adopted, only it is one thing to formulate laws, but decidedly another to administer them."

WHAT THE BALLOON HAS DONE.—The proportion of balloon accidents to successful descents, says Professor Blanchard, in the *Forum*, has been probably smaller than should have been anticipated. Blanchard, the first to take up ballooning as a vocation, died in his bed in 1809, after having made sixty-six ascents without accident. Many ascents have been made in the cause of science; and the names of Groen, who made over 1400 ascents; of John Wise, who made the distance from St. Louis, Mo., to Jefferson County, N.Y., 1200 miles in 20 hours; of Gay Lussac and Biot, who in 1804 made a most valuable series of meterological and physical observations at the height of 19,000 feet; of Glashier, who rose to 37,000 feet with the aeronaut Coxwell; and especially, recently, of the brothers Tissandier—all these are familiar to every one.

In 1794 the balloon was used for military purposes by Gen. Jourdan, who secured continual observation of the Austrian movements, and thus gained the battle of Fleury. The French are also reported to have used the same method in the battle of Solferino. A balloon corps was organized by Gen. McClellan at the outbreak of our own Civil War, 1861; and the use of balloons was one of the regular means of obtaining information of the movements of the enemy. During the siege of Paris, the balloon became the only means of sending dispatches out of the beleagured city, and proved to be very reliable. Of all the balloons sent out from Paris, over sixty in number, but three were lost; and they probably simply because they were dispatched at night, to avoid the risk from the fire of the enemy, which, as the event proved, was far less dangerous than darkness. Every government probably now has a balloon corps.

"SAVE MONEY ON BICYCLES."—One of the oldest, and to-day, one of the most successful bicycle houses in the country is that of A. W. Gump & Co., of Dayton, Ohio. Established in 1874, they commenced handling bicycles in 1880, and by persistent and skillful advertising, supplemented and backed up by fair and honest dealings, they have gained for themselves an enviable reputation second to none in their line of trade. They are centrally located and have every facility for shipping to any part of the country, and, being large shippers, can always secure the best rates for their customers, so that distance is but a trifle to them, their trade now extending to every corner of the United States, as well as Bermuda, Mexico and South America.

RUTHVEN'S PUZZLE PAGE.

Send all communications for this Department to EDWIN R. BRIGGS, West Bethel, Oxford County, Maine.

Answers to May Puzzles.

68.—Ruthven's Puzzle Page.

69.—
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C A I C
A G N E S
I N S A N E
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70.—
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L A B L A B
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L I V E R Y
A V E R S E
B E D Y E D
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71.—Cut(to)e. 72.—Gu(two)rt.

73.—Bur(do)n. 74.—S(crew)pine.

75.—M(other)y.

76.—
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R
S U P
S U P R A
R U P T U R E
P R U D E
A R E
E
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77.—
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M
R I M
R A G E S
M I G R A T E
M E A D O W
S T O L E
E W E R
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78.—Laver, ravel. 79.—Peach, cheap.

80.—Cellar, recall. 81.—Segar, rages.

82.—Request, quester.

83.—
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P
A S
P A P A V E R
S A B I N E
V I T T A
E N T I C E
R E A C H E D
E E
D
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84.—
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T
A T
T A B U L A R
T U Y E R E
L E V E L
A R E R E S
R E L E N T S
S T
S
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85.—Pern-a. 86.—String-y.

87.—Cock-y. 88.—Jant-u.

89.—Hog-o.

1.—*A Charade.*

He is *primal* in the sun
Like the TOTALS on the sea;
Thinking over dollars won
By the snares which he has spun,
Leaving multitudes undone,
Last is he.

MAUDE.

2.—*Oblique Rectangle.*

1 A letter. 2 A rodent. 3 Values. 4 Exclusive grants for the right to new inventions. 5 Capable of being extended or drawn out. 6 Compensation. 7 Inconsiderable. 8 Suffers. 9 Deduced. 10 Recalling to life. 11 A number. 12 A masculine name. 13 A letter.

CYRIL DEANE.

3.—*A Diamond.*

1 A letter. 2 To wrap in a vail. 3 A bird. 4 A trifler. 5 An enclosure for cattle. 6 To come fully up to. 7 A letter.

D. E. GERRY.

4.—*Pyramid.*

Across—1 A letter. 2 Close of the day. 3 To raise. 4 Culture. 5 A forerunner. *Down*—1 A consonant. 2 Tellurium (Abbr.). 3 A pronoun. 4 Fish of a certain kind. 5 To let down. 6 A male name. 7 To urge on. 8 Errors excepted (Abbr.). 9 A consonant.

TRIANGLE.

Amputations.

5.—Behead and curtail one who deals in cloth, and leave a plant.

6.—A fishing vessel, and leave healthful.

7.—A public or professional writer, and leave the manager of a stable.

8.—Faithful, and leave to tarnish.

9.—To write unskillfully, and leave the crop of birds.

MRS. J. W.

10.—*Numerical Enigma.*

The whole, composed of 11 letters, is a plant of several species, some of them prized for the beauty of their flowers. The 8, 6, 2, 4, is frightful. The 10, 9, 5, 1, is a thick mass. The 11, 7, 3, is a diligent student.

SAVIDGE.

Drop Letter Proverbs.

11.—A-o-l-b-l-i-s-o-s-o-.

12.—A-l-r-h-u-d-a-e-g-o-m-m-r-. W. H. R.

Word Syncopations.

13.—Take an imaginary being from prosperity, and leave merchandise.

14.—A poisonous serpent of Egypt from irritable, and leave to desire.

15.—An excursion from a boy, and leave a kind of spiritous drink.

16.—A vessel for holding water from a heating apparatus, and leave the visible surface.

ADELAIDE.

Answers in two Months.

Prizes for Solutions.

For the first complete or best incomplete list of answers to this month's puzzles, received before July 10th, we offer an illustrated novelette; and for the next best list a small book of poems.

March Solvers.

Lizette, Birdie Lane, Rollin G. Stone, Katie Smith, E. G. D., Bridget McQ., D. E. Gerry, Ned Nason, English Boy, Nicholas, Minnie Jones, Savidge, Black Hawk, Teddy, J. D. L., Vinnie, Ann Eliza, A. Mary Khan, Ida May, Geraldine and Lillie Lee.

Prize-Winners.

Lizette, Mechanic Falls, Maine, for the largest list of correct answers; J. D. L., Philadelphia, Pa., for the next best list.

EDITOR'S DRAWER.

THINGS PLEASANT AND OTHERWISE.

THE OLD PIANO IN THE FRONT PARLOR.

(AFTER LONGFELLOW.)

Somewhat back from the village street
Stands the old-fashioned country seat.
Across its antique portico
Tall poplar trees their shadows throw.
And there, throughout the livelong day
Jemima plays the pi-a-na,
Do, re, mi,
Mi, re, do.

In the front parlor, there it stands,
And there Jemima plys her hands
While her papa, beneath his cloak,
Mutters and groans, "This is no joke!"
And swears to himself and sighs, alas!
With sorrowful voice to all who pass,
"Do, re, mi,
Mi, re, do."

Through days of death and days of birth
She plays as if she owned the earth.
Through every swift vicissitude
She drums as if it did her good,
And still she sits from morn till night
And plunks away with main and might
Do, re, mi,
Mi, re, do.

In that mansion used to be
Free hearted hospitality;
But that was many years before
Jemima monkeyed with the score.
When she began her daily plunk,
Into their graves the neighbors sunk.
Do, re, mi,
Mi, re, do.

To other worlds they've long since fled,
All thankful that they're safely dead.
They stood the racket while alive
Until Jemima rose at five,
And then they laid their burdens down,
And one and all they skipped the town.
Do, re, mi,
Mi, re, do.

—*The Jury, Rochester, N.Y.*

TWO MINUTES LATE.

MR. BROWN'S EXPERIENCE AT CATCHING EARLY TRAINS.

Mr. Brown is going to the city on the seven o'clock train, Monday morning. Important business demands that he should go on that train. The nine o'clock express would not answer his purpose at all. It is imperative that he should catch the seven o'clock mail.

He tells this to his wife on Sunday evening, after they get home from Rev. Mr. Dingley's stirring lecture on Total Depravity.

Mrs. B. is absorbed in reflecting on the terrible condition of everybody, and the wicked in particular, and does not pay much attention to Brown's little communication. She manages, however, to comprehend that he wants his breakfast at six o'clock, sharp. It is ten minutes' walk to the station, and Brown is a corpulent man, with symptoms of heart disease, and it is dangerous for him to hurry.

Mrs. B. calls the cook and gives her order for breakfast. The cook is an estimable young lady, and she has a "follower" who will stay later than he should, and Maggie is sleepy mornings, and cross, too. For we have always observed that girls whose lovers stay too late at night are invariably cross the next day. Maggie is no exception. It is just six o'clock when she gets out of bed. It is a foggy morning, and so dark that she overslept herself. The fire is out in the range. The coal refuses to burn. The kindlings are damp. The chimney is disposed to smoke. Everything is at cross purposes.

Mr. Brown is stamping about overhead in his very creakiest boots, trying to button on an extremely stiff linen collar. Buttonholes are never big enough, unless they are too big, you know. Off comes a button, and Mrs. Brown is too busy quieting the baby to attend to such a thing as a button. Button, indeed! when that darling little cherub is crying her precious eyes out at being waked up in the middle of the night by her bad, naughty papa, who is going to Boston, or some other wicked place.

Brown puts in a pin, and proceeds to button on his cuffs. One cuff button is missing. He rushes round the room frantically, overturning cologne stands, bottles of paregoric and soothing syrup, hat boxes, ribbons, and the pile of be-ruffled and be-fluted dry-goods on the rocking-chair which his wife wore last night to that lecture on Total Depravity.

Mrs. Brown spitefully tells him he needn't tear the house down; and directly he finds the button in the wash bowl, where he remembers to have heard it drop last night.

In not a very placid frame of mind he goes down to breakfast. Coffee fearfully hot and potatoes fearfully cold. He tries a mouthful of the scalding liquid, but he ejects it almost instantly, and sprinkles into fashionable polka spots his clean shirt bosom and the fresh table-cloth. Feels like swearing, but remembers that he joined the church last week, and profanity is forbidden.

He chokes down a morsel of soggy bread and watery potatoes, and begins a plate of oatmeal mush, which he is eating for his digestion; but the distant whistle of a locomotive strikes on his ear. He starts up—men who are going anywhere in the railway cars always start at the sound of a whistle, even when they know that their train is not due for two hours.

He looks at the clock. Just fifteen minutes of seven. No time to put on his overcoat or muffle up his throat. He must do that as he goes. He crushes on his hat, seizes his sachel, crams into it a bundle of papers, a half-finished novel which he means to read by the way, and a pair of shoes which his wife got in town for Sadie, the oldest girl, which were too small and must be exchanged.

He dashes out of the front door, the sachel in one hand and his muffler in the other, and his overcoat on his arm. Mrs. Brown screams to him from the chamber window:—

"John, you are never going off without kissing darling little Daisy?"

So he goes back and gets through the kissing ceremony, and hears, as he rushes down-stairs, Mrs. B. telling him to get ashes of roses, sixteen yards, and be sure and not forget the chinchilla for Tom's coat, and mind and get the shoes with steel shanks.

When he is ten yards from the house he finds that he has forgotten his watch, and by the time that is secured he has just eight minutes in which to make a ten minutes' walk.

Whistle sounds in the distance as he tears along. Jones screams to him from the piazza of the house, as he smokes his after-breakfast cigar, that he'd better hurry or he'll be late.

Brown puts on a little more steam and puffs along. That overcoat is desperately heavy. So is the sachel. He tries to change them from one hand to the other. Down goes the sachel in the mud, and out roll those shoes and a bottle which Mrs. B. is sending to town for "baby's drops." He secures them at last and starts upon the run. Nothing but running will save him now.

People along the way become excited about the thing. They rush to the curbstones to see how he is coming out. Small boys wave their hats to him, and shout:—

"Go it, old Fatty!"

And he hears from a small army of gamins, who are playing marbles, such cheering remarks as these:—

"Two-forty!"

"I'll bet my money on him!"

"Good bottom!"

"Git the pole!"

"Pocket the sweepstakes!"

"Go it, Toots!"

Brown is angry enough to shake the breath out of the individual bodies of the little wretches, but he remembers that free speech is one of the privileges for which our forefathers fought, and bled, and died, and he forbears—and, besides, he hasn't time.

All the dogs in town are congregating to see him off, and the barking is most enlivening. Dogs seem to know that a man running for a train has no time to kick them, and his extremity is their opportunity. Dogs are very sagacious animals.

Brown does not venture to look up lest it should take time, but he knows by the sound of the bell that the train is running into the depot. He redoubles his exertions. The perspiration is pouring in a stream down his forehead, and his clean shirt feels like a wet sheet "pack," but he has hopes. Puffing and blowing, he stumbles on the rear end of the platform.

"Two minutes late!" yells a bystander.

Brown strikes into a gallop, resolved to do it or die.

The bell rings furiously.

"All aboard!" shouts that diabolical conductor, in his gilt-banded cap; and the train begins to move.

Brown waves his sachel in the air; but when did ever the spectacle of a waving sachel melt the stony hearts of a set of railroad employes? They rather enjoy Brown's agony. They lean out and grin at him as they glide along. His blood is up; he makes a flying dash for the hand-rail of the last car and swings himself to the platform, minus his hat, which bounces off and rolls helplessly in the gutter.

Never mind the hat—let it go. He has done it, if he was two minutes late. Yes, sir; Brown is going to the city on the seven o'clock train. He is.—*Kate Thorne, in New York Weekly.*

Somebody says, "Half the troubles of life are born of trifles." Somebody is not far wrong. Man is so fearfully and wonderfully made that he bears great evils with more equanimity than what are called little annoyances. If Benedict loses the wife of his bosom, the odds are that he bears the dispensation like a Christian; but if he mislays his latch-key he too frequently swears like a heretic.

An individual capable of burying his grandmother without a groan has been known to manifest a remarkable degree of feeling at the absence of a shirt-button. The mysterious disappearance of small, inanimate objects frequently gives rise to the most lively concern.

Strong-minded ladies, who would scorn to show undue excitement amid the convulsions of an earthquake, have been heard to use intemperate expressions when they could not find their scissors.

There are dozens of articles in common use which have a villainously provoking trick of concealing themselves at the very moment when they are most needed, that might well disturb

the moral equilibrium of a saint. Indeed, we have known a church member, in good standing, to say things about a missing pair of spectacles which were anything but canonical.

Devout anglers, who would not have winced under the misfortune that befell Jonah, sometimes stamp with rage when their lines, instead of falling in pleasant places, get fast in a submerged snag or an impending tree; and we have seen two Christian women in a street car in a sublime passion because one of them wanted a window open and the other wanted it shut.

Almost any of us can brace ourselves up to encounter with fortitude the great difficulties of life; it is the little ones that upset. He who can bear both without wincing or ill-temper is not only a hero to the world at large but even to his family.

He was a majestic man, with a whole car load of dignity resting on his shoulders as he walked down the beach to the edge of the water.

You can chaff some men as they thus stand waiting. You can call them old man, or old fellow, and ask if the water is cold enough for them, or if they don't want another iceberg in theirs. No one attempted to chaff this old Roman. His demeanor forbade it. All the small boys stood back in a respectful way while he folded his arms and gazed out across the heaving sea as if he expected to see the coast of Spain.

The great man finally entered the water. It was beneath his dignity to yell "ooch!" as the cold water sawed away at his ankles, or to pause in his advance as he got started. He headed right out for the breakers, squared himself for the coming roller, and he wouldn't have turned his side or jumped it for a thousand dollars. The roller came booming in, and while all others ducked or dived, his majesty stood on his pins and faced it.

Next moment something came ashore—something which turned over and over as it came—something which spit and gasped and clawed and strangled as it struggled up. It was his majesty. The wind had been knocked out of him, and he had been flung end over end, and plowed along the bottom, and his dignity was nil. As he got up there was a general yell of delight, but he did not hear it. He looked neither to the right nor left, but marched away with stately step for the bath-house, leaving a dripping trail on the sands behind him, and we never saw him again.

A laborer at the Dundee harbor told his wife, on awakening, a curious dream which he had during the night. He dreamed that he saw coming toward him, in order, four rats. The first one was very fat, and was followed by two lean rats, the rear rat being blind. The dreamer was greatly perplexed as to what evil might follow, as it has been understood that to dream of rats denotes coming calamity. He appealed to his wife about this, but she, poor woman, could not help him. His son, a sharp lad, who heard his father tell the story, volunteered to be interpreter. "The fat rat," he said, "is the man who keeps the public house which you visit so often, the two lean ones are me and my mother, and the blind one is yourself, father."

A family let their house furnished, leaving in it a large dog. The tenant was an old lady who liked to sit in a particularly comfortable chair in the drawing-room; but as the dog was also fond of the chair, she frequently found him in possession. Being rather afraid of the dog, she did not dare to drive him out, and therefore used to go to the window and call "Cats!" The dog would then rush to the window and bark, and the lady would take possession of the chair. One day the dog entered the room and found the lady in possession of the chair. He ran to the window and barked excitedly. The lady got up to see what was the matter, and the dog instantly seated himself in the chair.

Dashaway, to hostess, after an evening party: "I want to ask you if I may have the privilege of escorting the two Curtis girls home. They are by far the prettiest girls in the room."

Hostess: "Certainly, my dear Mr. Dashaway; I was just about to ask you if you would be so kind, for there is such a scarcity of gentlemen. But it is rather awkward for you that there are two of them."

"Oh, that's all right."

A moment later, to the elder Miss Curtis: "My dear Miss Curtis, I am going to escort your sister home. I will be back for you in half an hour."

Widow Grizzle's husband lately died of cholera. In the midst of the most acute bodily pain, after the hand of death had touched him, and while writhing in agony, his gentle wife said to him, "Well, Mr. Grizzle, you needn't kick round so and wear all the sheets out, if you are dying!"

DIARY FOR A HOT WEEK.

Sunday—Day of rest; of course nothing can be done.

Monday—Being early in the week, don't be too precipitate in beginning anything.

Tuesday—Determine not to let the week go by without achieving something brilliant.

Wednesday—Resolve on vigorous measures for to-morrow.

Thursday—Mature yesterday's deliberations.

Friday—Rather too late in the week to do anything.

Saturday—Give yourself up to society, and consult friends (who know best) what is to be done next.

SUMMER CORRESPONDENCE.

WIFE—Dear Charles, my room is small, but I wish you were as comfortable as I am.

HUSBAND—Dear Arabella, it is terribly hot here at home, but don't return on my account. I think only of you and your comfort.